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LAUNCH ISSUE



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FEATURED!

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HALLO! Abe's adventure continues on a console with power to impress!



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NEWS AND RELEASE DATES!

46 NEW GAMES SCRUTINISED,
PREVIEWED AND PLAYED!

PLUS:

DEAD OR ALIVE 3

144
XBOX
GAMES
INSIDE!

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01



PREVIEWED!



HALO

FIRE POWER! First-person shooters come of age!



STAR WARS

FORCE! Obi-Wan and StarFighter featured!



PROJECT GOTHAM

SPEED! State-of-the-art racing!

ALSO INSIDE...

TOCA RACE DRIVER

Codemasters starts a revolution in driving games!

NIGHTCASTER

Spellbinding adventures in a fantasy land. Now that's magic!

SHENMUE 2

SEGA's Dreamcast classic is coming to Xbox!





It all starts here. The next generation of videogame consoles is nearly upon us. The Xbox is at last a reality and we've already got one! Jealous? You should be, because this console rocks! Forget the jagged edges of games on the PlayStation2, forget the bouncing plumbers and software drought of GameCube – Xbox is one serious piece of kit and we're here to explain it all to you.

So, what kind of magazine is **XBM** going to be? This is a magazine for hardcore videogame fans. No embarrassing fashion shoots, no 16-page section on DVDs just so that we can blag some discs, we just love playing games and writing about it. We guarantee to bring you all the most up-to-date information on every Xbox game. We've already been around the world to bring you exclusive interviews and screenshots for this launch issue – and just days after this issue goes to press we're off again (it's a tough life really). But all this toil is so that you can be the most well-informed readers in the world. Couple this with our Web site at xbox.totalgames.net and you've got a 24 hour, up-to-the-minute news, preview, reviews and solutions service that's second to none!

This issue we've got a non-stop showcase of all the greatest Xbox games in development. There's a ten-page feature on the console itself, so you can learn what all the sockets and buttons do in plenty of time for the 14 March launch. One of the biggest stars on Xbox has to be Abe, and we've got a massive feature on *Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee* over on page 50. You can even be one of the first people in the country with an Xbox by entering our competition over on page 86.

So, this is us setting out our stall and hoping you all like what we've done. If you don't, drop us a line and we'll try to sort things out (or sort you out!) If you do, still drop us a line because it's always great to hear what you think. Next issue we'll have reviews of the entire American launch games, so we've got lots of playing to do. Enjoy! ●

Nick Roberts

NICK ROBERTS
MANAGING EDITOR



HALO



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XBM QUICK FIX

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"AN ENJOYABLE SPECTACLE AND VASTLY SUPERIOR TO ITS HOLLYWOOD COUNTERPART."

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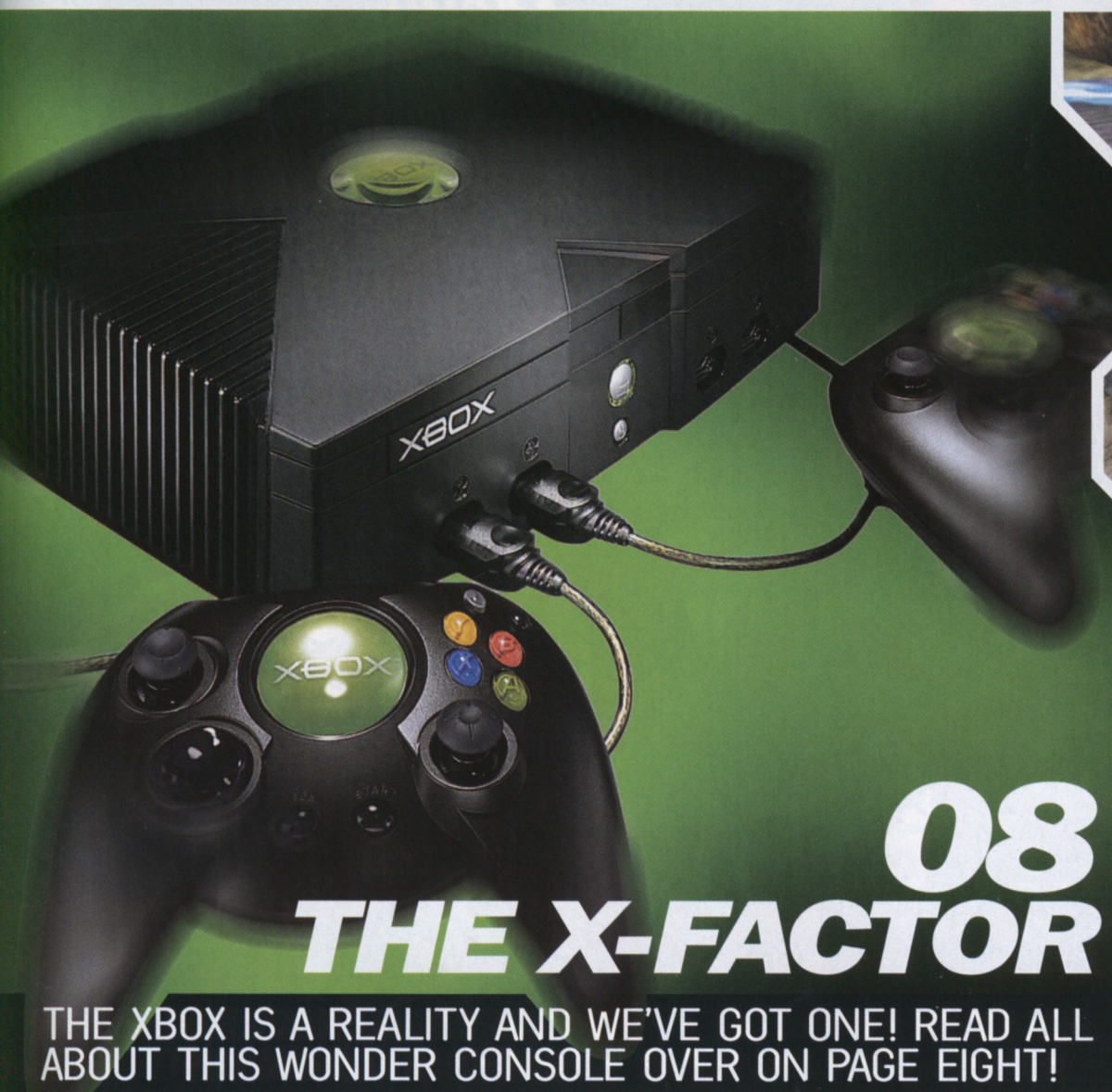


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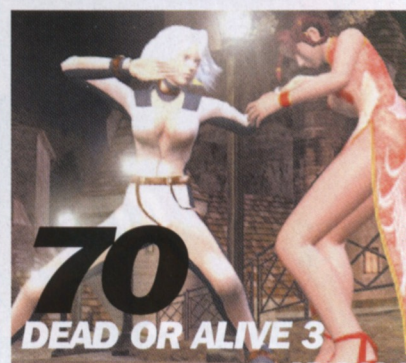


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THE XBOX IS A REALITY AND WE'VE GOT ONE! READ ALL ABOUT THIS WONDER CONSOLE OVER ON PAGE EIGHT!



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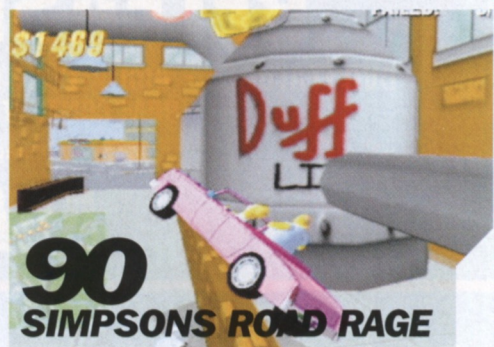
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ONE OF THE FEW
VIDEOGAMES WITH
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ODDWorld
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SKATEBOARDING...
WELL, PRETTY MUCH
ANY KIND OF BOARDING
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THIS ISSUE IN XBM

WORK IN PROGRESS

Packed with developer interviews
and pre-production materials, our
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you up-to-date on the progression of
big games.

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144 XBOX GAMES REVEALED!

XBM

IF YOU'RE A
VIDEOGAMES FAN,
YOU'RE GOING TO
LOVE THE XBOX!



FEATURES

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these 132 pages, it's amazing it all fits!

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TELL US!



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person shoot-'em-ups.
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**070 ... DEAD OR
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take a look for yourself.

080 STAR WARS
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explore this new force on
the Xbox.

Feature

THE X-FACTOR

THE X FACTOR

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF







XBOX

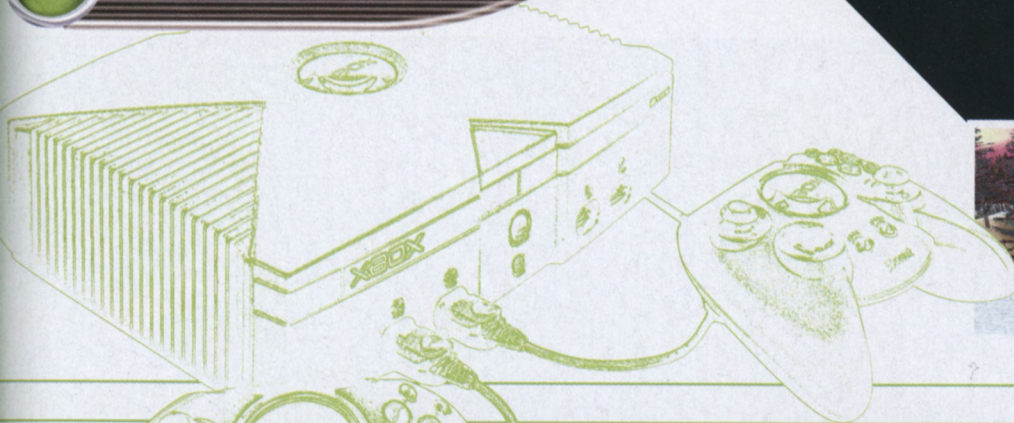
MULTIMEDIA FOR THE MASSES

WORDS: Mike Richardson
PICTURES: Microsoft, Peter
Stevens Photography

**"IT IS MORE THAN A LITTLE WEIRD
TO COMPREHEND MICROSOFT
CREATING A CONSOLE"**

**WHAT DO YOU GET
FROM XBOX STRAIGHT
FROM THE BOX?**

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Not just a console – it's a fully functioning DVD player too!
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Now you can talk to your adversaries before you blow 'em away!
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JUST AS ZORRO CARVED HIS Z INTO EVERY WALL, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO ESCAPE THE WRATH AND POWER OF THE X IN 2002. CATCH A GLIMPSE OF YOUR DREAMS AS WE UNVEIL THE FUTURE OF CONSOLE GAMING...



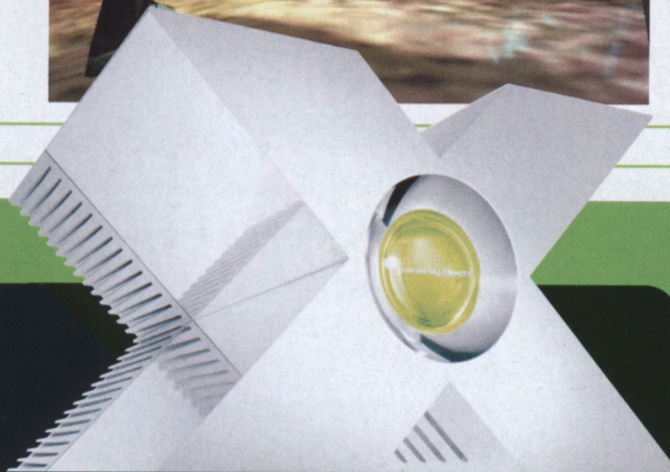
Ask somebody about games consoles a year ago and the only names on their lips would be Sony, Nintendo and SEGA. How things can change in such a short time. SEGA has thrown in the hardware towel and one of the least likely sources has entered into the battle arena with Xbox – Microsoft! These are surreal times, and you know what? The opposition have a lot to be afraid of.

It is more than a little weird to comprehend Microsoft creating a console, but the longer you think about it the more it starts to make sense. The great thing about a huge corporation like Microsoft turning its hand to videogaming is that the company has an obscene amount of money. The emphasis here is squarely on the word obscene – a \$500 million marketing budget for starters! Of course, this wealth is very good for you as a gamer because it means that no expense has been spared when it comes to developing the finest console on the planet. GameCube is cute, PlayStation2 has been around a while, but Xbox is the most powerful console by far.

The money has gone into features such as the nippy 733Mhz Intel processor and the specially-designed 250Mhz nVidia graphics chip, which puts all home PCs to shame. These create immense raw power for producing state-of-the-art games, but into the bargain you're also getting a DVD player, music CD player, MP3 player, instant Internet access and a sandwich toasting mechanism (okay, the last one is just our wishful thinking)! This truly is multimedia for the masses.

CONSOLE CORE

Now many people associate the Microsoft name with PCs – it's only natural, as they've dominated the PC software market for as long as anyone can remember. It must be stated from the outset, though, that Xbox is definitely a videogames console. This is the very definition of plug and play, so you'll never have to worry about whether or not your machine



XBOX TAKE ONE

GAMES CONSOLE AND HANDY MIRROR, IN CASE YOU'RE IN NEED OF A SHAVE!

The Xbox was announced in January 2000 to a stunned audience. Microsoft displayed one of the biggest console designs ever seen – a massive X in a cool silver finish. As a console, this design was never going to reach the home simply because of its size and complexity, but it was incredibly cool. You never know, perhaps a few limited edition machines might make it into the public domain!



NEW CONSOLE = NEW CHEESY DEMOS!

THE FIRST EVER MOVING IMAGES TO BE RUN THROUGH THE MIGHTY XBOX...



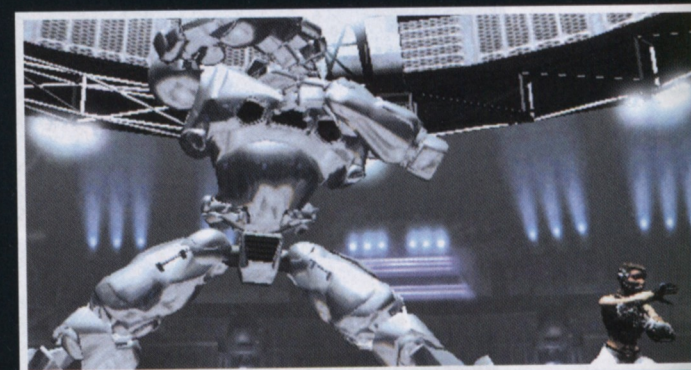
An obligatory requirement of the gaming industry when it comes to console announcements is the technical demo. After all, there's no point standing up in front of crowds of people boasting about an inanimate box full of chips if you can't prove the pudding. Like a good boy scout, Microsoft was well prepared with some cool demos to show off the machine's potential.



MOUSETRAPS. It may look like a mess (and it is) but this shows that the Xbox can handle complicated physics en-masse – like this room full of exploding mousetraps!



BUTTERFLIES. Thousands of fluttering insects spreading their wings over a reflective pond? Hah, this is all in a day's work for the might and power of the Xbox!



ROBOT. One huge, shiny, metallic beast showing off real-time lighting alongside some of the smoothest and most realistic animation techniques you've ever seen.

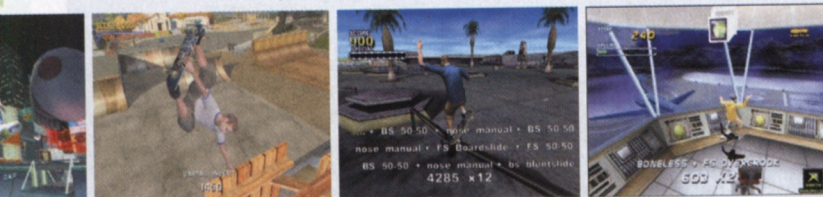
"YOU'RE ALSO GETTING A DVD PLAYER, MUSIC CD PLAYER, MP3 PLAYER AND INSTANT INTERNET ACCESS"

is fast enough, has the right graphics card, is stocked with enough memory and so on. With the Xbox you get the best of both worlds – fast console gaming and PC-quality titles with absolutely no worries or need to upgrade.

The fact that the architecture is similar to that found in a PC means bringing across PC games and development techniques couldn't be easier. When games companies started working on the PlayStation2 there were some major problems because a lot of teams just weren't used to the new system. As a result it took an entire year before the 'killer apps' started to roll in, but this is not a problem for the Xbox. There are already well over 150 games in the works because developers are so down with the system.

GAMING DELIGHT

Gaming companies from all areas are jumping on-board the Xbox bandwagon. You've got big PC developers like Bungie, Blitz Games and Sierra, as well as console giants like EA, Infogrames and Konami. The number of developers on board is far too many to list here, but suffice to say the mix of console and PC elements means that developers are travelling from afar to the Xbox Mecca. Microsoft has its field of dreams and the queues are building! This is, of course, very



GREEN WITH ENVY

WE PLUG IN AN XBOX AND STAND BACK IN AWE!

Not content with creating one of the coolest consoles around, Microsoft has included some amazing system menus. A swirling mass of green computer screens and cables, this wouldn't look out of place on the front of a high-end DVD. Who said selecting console and TV set-ups had to be a boring process? Hell, it's worth getting the console just to mess around inside here for a couple of hours – and you don't even have to buy any games to appreciate it!



HUD HUB: This is where it all happens! From here you can play games, music, access the Web, edit your hard drive... or whatever else you want to do.



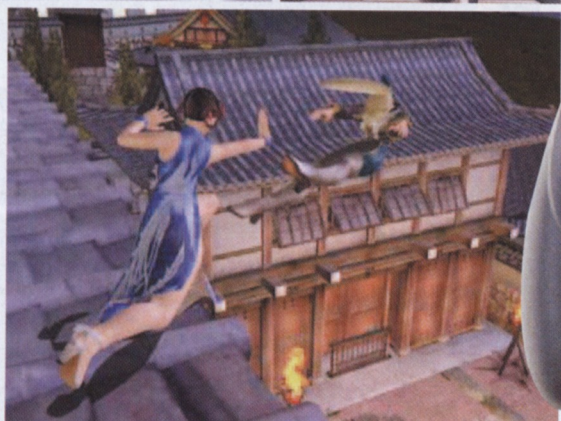
JUKE BOX: As well as being able to play music CDs, the Xbox allows you to create playlists by essentially uploading your favourite music.



VA VA ZOOM: Selecting a sub-section of the main menu forces the screen to zoom around, *Matrix*-style, twisting through digital space towards its destination.



“UNLIKE OTHER CONSOLES, THE LAUNCH GAMES ON XBOX ARE ACTUALLY PRETTY DAMNED AMAZING”



good news for you, because unlike other consoles the launch games on Xbox are actually pretty damned amazing!

On day one you'll be able to ride the slopes with *Amped*, bend your mind with Abe in *Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee*, dive into the wonderful world of *Halo*, push the pedal to the metal in *Project Gotham Racing* and rack up frags in *Unreal Championship* – and all this is just the tip of the iceberg! Beyond that you've got *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3*, *Star Wars: Obi Wan*, *Metal Gear Solid X*, *Blood Wake*, *Crazy Taxi Next* and *Dead Or Alive 3*. This super-console isn't just going to fly off the mark, it's going to keep going until it's lapped the opposition into teary-eyed submission!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Unlike console launches in the past, the Xbox will boast games that embrace all the machine's power from day one. Coming from a PC background, the industry's best programmers have already got the skills they need to embrace the state-of-the-art technology. PlayStation2 had a steep learning curve, so gamers are only just playing games in the third or fourth generation of software that really show what the console is capable of. Xbox's advanced 3D geometry techniques such as vertex shading and texture



TURNING JAPANESE

APPARENTLY THE JAPANESE LIKE THINGS SMALL... JUST ASK A JAPANESE WOMAN!

Cultural divides will always split the games industry into different sections – for example, how many horse racing or dating games have you bought in the past year? We're guessing it's not a single one, but ask the same question a few inches to the east on your world map and the answer would be completely different.

The games aren't the only victims of division, however, as Microsoft has designed an entirely different controller for the Japanese market – it's much smaller. The only problem is, it looks a hell of a lot cooler and is much nicer to hold than the official Western pad!

CONSOLE PERFECTION?

THREE GOOD-LOOKING CONSOLES, THERE'S NO DENYING THAT, BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE LOVELY YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO GO HOME WITH TONIGHT!



ow we're not the kind of magazine to crawl through the gutters reducing the level of healthy competition to petty bickering, but... the Xbox clearly does rock! You don't have to be Einstein to make sense of these figures, which do more than speak for themselves – they practically shout.

This is just the tip of the iceberg, however, as the main processor is of Intel design, whilst the graphics chip is co-developed with nVidia. If you don't know your PCs, this translates into the best of best – giving games

developers the perfect tool to play with. Also there to be abused by the development teams is complete AC3 digital surround sound support, full-scene anti-aliasing, which helps to smooth out the visuals, and a 10Gb hard drive to store data on.

Like we said before, we're not the kind of magazine to throw stones, but when the opposing consoles blatantly live in glasshouses it seems the sportsmanlike thing to do! Check out the stats for yourself, we think you'll be suitably impressed...



and lighting control are all handled through the sinister black magic that is nVidia design. This takes the pressure off the main processor, allowing it to concentrate on superior AI and other such necessities needed to make the gameplay fun.

The nVidia XGPU chip also allows on-board, high-resolution, full-scene anti-aliasing – an extremely important element that is shockingly absent from the PlayStation2. If you ever see one of the early PlayStation2 games running you'll notice that a lot of the supposedly smooth lines appear to be jagged – often stair-stepping across the screen. That was because the developers didn't have instant access to anti-aliasing techniques. Needless to say, even the early Xbox games look smoother than a supermodel's toned body and sharper than a pointy battle-axe with serrated edges. Add to all this a 10Gb hard drive and DirectX8 drivers and it's easy to see why game developers are so eager to sail off into the sunset with the Microsoft flag blowing in the wind.

The Xbox also features full AC3 support for complete surround sound in games – something that a lot of developers are sure to make use of. If you haven't experienced surround sound before then you don't know what you're

missing. With a few speakers set up you'll be able to hear cars pass you in driving games or footsteps creep behind you in first-person shooters!

CONNECTIVITY

Of course, surround sound is sure to give you the tactical edge when it comes to playing online multiplayer games. One of the big selling points of the Xbox is that straight out of the box it's fully Internet compatible. Better still, if you're fortunate enough to have the connection option it also uses broadband (see box on page 17 for patronising explanation!) for slowdown-free play – very good news since there are a whole host of first-person shooters on the way, including the highly anticipated *Unreal Championship*. The online capabilities go much deeper than this, however, as you will be able to challenge people from all over the world to a game of tennis, a chilled-out skating session or strategic battles.

Whatever your wants or needs, the Xbox has it covered. We're not going to say that this is the console to beat all consoles, as we all know that each machine has its own plus points, but it just so happens that the Xbox has enough plus signs to keep Carol Vorderman in business for a very, very long time. Start saving your pennies for a 14 March release. ●

BOXED

SO JUST WHAT ARE YOU LETTING YOURSELF IN FOR, YOU ASK? XBM OPENS PANDORA'S XBOX...

As you flick through this magazine, you'll see what the new console is capable of, and the fine games you're going to be able to play on it. But this doesn't tell you exactly what you're getting for your money, so here's what's what on the big, black box...

One front loading DVD tray to drop games, films and music CD's onto ready for consumption. If you're interested this is a 2-5X speed mechanism spinning the shiny things madly around.

Big silver button with stylish green trim to open the drawer ready for discs. A small thing we know but without it you wouldn't be able to do a single thing – apart from look at the menus of course!

Possibly the smallest thing on the entire machine but this is the one that makes it all work. When you first push this power button your hands will be trembling and your brow will be dripping with sweat!

Hidden away under the pad and resting at your very fingertips are two analogue trigger buttons, perfect for firing in first-person shooters or accelerating in racing games.

These two analogue sticks are probably going to get a load more use than the D-pad as they allow minor movements for more precise control. They also depress for an extra button.

For when you feel like a bit of retro gaming or easy navigation through menus, the bog standard digital D-pad is here. Also great for those fireball manoeuvres in fighting games.

At the centre of the pad is a Start button alongside a Back button. This gives developers across the world a universal standard for menu navigation.

These two black and white buttons are slightly smaller than the main group and are likely to be used for such infrequent things as special moves and in-game menus.

**"YOU WILL BE ABLE
TO CHALLENGE
PEOPLE FROM ALL
OVER THE WORLD
TO A GAME"**

This is where you plug all your bits in. The Xbox features four USB ports but they're not like other USB connectors – you won't be able to plug in a generic keyboard.

A familiar looking socket if you've ever owned a console before. This is the beauty that takes the magic of the console and delivers it to your TV. A variety of connectors will be released for this, including one for high-definition TVs!

Until the day a solar-powered or wind-up console is released you're going to have to put up with slotting in a power lead – annoying we know, but such is life. The good news is this is a bog-standard simple connection.

A basic ethernet socket allows you to do more with your Xbox. Unlike other consoles the Xbox lets you hook up to the Internet straight out of the cardboard, and this is what you'll be using to do it.

Sadly this sexy green bubble doesn't light up, but the Xbox controller does feature dual vibration motors to make sure you feel every kick, gun recoil, car engine and explosion.

The main action buttons on the pad, these four brightly coloured nobbles are completely analogue to the tune of 256 degrees of sensitivity. More than mortal man can manage.

Underneath the front side of the pad are two expansion bays waiting to be used by any developer brave enough to try something different. They can also be used to house memory cards should the 10Gb hard drive not be enough!

“IF YOU HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED SURROUND SOUND BEFORE THEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSING”

DVD REMOTE

MOVIES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

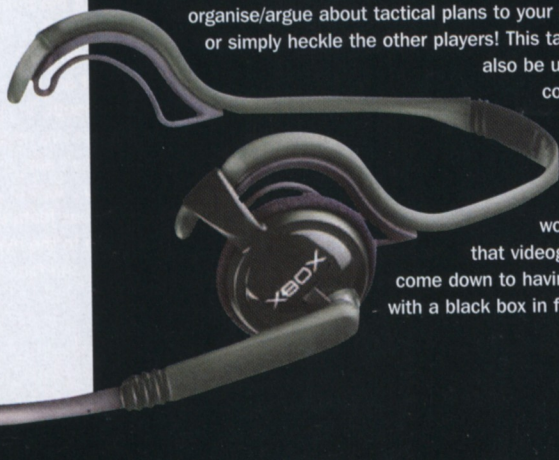
When you buy an Xbox you also buy into the world of DVD with its crisp pictures, perfect audio and extras that suck hours from your life. Unfortunately, this isn't something you can do straight out of the box, but all is not lost because all you need to do is pick up a DVD remote for a mere £19.99 – hurrah! Now this may sound like you're being ripped off but it does, in fact, make perfect sense. You see, if this were included in the box with the machine you would have had to pay more because there's a fee to be paid by manufacturers of DVD players, and not everybody wants the DVD function. If you ask us, though, this is pretty much a must-buy!

HEADSET

TIME TO TALK BACK!

Being able to play games online is a major bonus in itself, but being able to talk to the people you're playing with is like a dream come true. Perfect for team-based shooters this will allow you to organise/argue about tactical plans to your heart's content – or simply heckle the other players! This tasty little toy will also be used to

communicate with your games by way of automatic commands. Who would've thought that videogaming would come down to having conversations with a black box in front of the telly!



BRAINS AND LOOKS

WE'VE TOLD YOU HOW GOOD THIS NEW-FANGLED MACHINE IS, BUT DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT! HAVE A LOOK FOR YOURSELVES AT THE MAGIC X INGREDIENT...

POLYGON OVERLOAD

You can't play a game today without polygons! Everything you see on the screen is made up of these tiny wonders. The thing is, though, it's almost getting to the stage where there are so many polys flying around you can't quite tell one from another. The Xbox is at the top end of polygon performance compared to other consoles, being able to shift around 125 million polygons per second! Of course, this is raw power without textures or effects but it is nonetheless impressive, as you can see from this *Amped* screenshot.



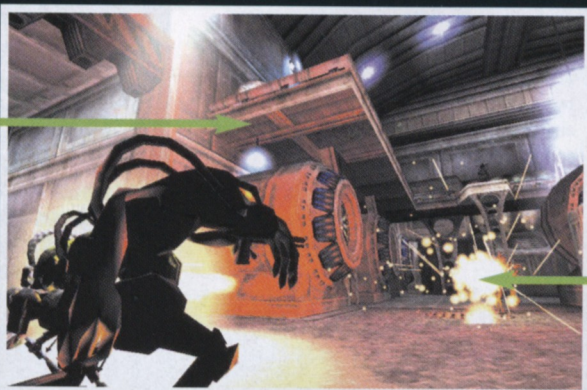
HUGE EXPANSIVE LEVELS

Imagine you're a games developer. If you've got a hugely powerful console complete with a built in hard drive, odds are you're going to exploit it to the full. The boundaries and potential for Xbox are virtually limitless. With enough time a developer could create entire galaxies, complete with fully-developed worlds for you to explore to your heart's content. *Halo* is one good example, as it features some obscenely massive play areas to mess around in – it's a good job there are vehicles to use!



TEXTURE COMPRESSION

A screen full of plain polygons is boring. Yes, gameplay may be everything but trying to play a game with bland textures would soon send you barmy. They help to bring life to rooms and player models, creating character where there was dull monotony. Now, the Xbox features a rather handy technique known as texture compression, which allows games to sport more colours and patterns than ever before. This is great news for your eyes – especially since the Xbox supports high-resolution textures.



BUMP MAPPING

Textures alone are not enough to make a game look photo-realistic, but the lack of power in consoles has meant that this is where the graphical delights have ended in the past. The Xbox supports a technique known as bump mapping. Essentially what this involves is putting textures (as in feel) onto textures (as in patterns) – don't worry, it's not that complicated! Take that kneecap, for example – those scratches could quite easily be physical ridges in the surface instead of just a flat lifeless texture shaded to make it look like indentations.



REAL-TIME LIGHTING

They may not make a bit of difference to the game but cool real-time lighting and shadow effects are guaranteed to make the average gamer jump up and down with joy. All such effects on the Xbox are handled by the powerful nVidia graphics chip – which means no extra pressure is put onto the main processor. Better still, developers don't need to spend ages on writing fancy effects into the software. Look at the light reflected in these snowboarder's goggles and the subtle shadow effects on his face... are you jumping yet?

HIGH FRAME RATES

One nagging problem that dogs the occasional game is slowdown. If you push something hard enough then it will break. Every console has a limit, but the Xbox does have quite a few advantages on its side including the hard drive, a huge processor, loads of RAM and a god-like graphics chip. With all of this in action you can have loads of enemies running around shooting off pretty effects at speeding vehicles with absolutely no slowdown in sight. Long live 60 frames-per-second!

PARTICLE EFFECTS

Real-time shadow and lighting isn't the only eye candy special effect handled by the masterful nVidia device. Taking yet more pressure off the main processor, the graphics chip also handles all particle effects. This includes a massive range of special effects such as dust being thrown up by cars wheels, sparks spraying from explosions and transparent fog effects. The list is literally endless and the rewards for you as a gamer are massive. You don't even have to do anything other than sit back and enjoy the show!

ANTI-ALIASING

When the PlayStation2 came out the term 'aliasing' was the bane of the console's early life. Basically, this refers to the ugly and jagged stair-stepping seen on lines that are in theory supposed to be straight and smooth. To get rid of these, anti-aliasing techniques are needed – something the PlayStation2 wasn't entirely down with straight out of the box. As you've probably guessed already the Xbox features on-board anti-aliasing thanks again to the nVidia chip, which means the software and the processor can breathe easy.

X01 INTERVIEW



WHO BETTER TO EXPLAIN MORE ABOUT EVERYTHING XBOX THAN MICROSOFT'S GROUP MANAGER OF THE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY GROUP AND XBOX TECHNOLOGY OFFICER, SEAMUS BLACKLEY. WE GOT TO GRILL HIM AT THE X01 EVENT IN CANNES...

WHY IS THE XBOX SO BIG WHEN LAPTOPS HAVE HARD DISCS AND COMPONENTS BUT ARE MUCH SMALLER?

There's an easy answer to that question – your laptop won't play *Dead or Alive 3*. Why? Not enough space inside. The **nVidia graphics processor is the largest, most powerful processor created by man to date**. So it generates heat and it requires space for all those pins. It has 650 different pins – actually it could be more than that, it could be over 1000 – it's a big, big piece of silicon. And that **combined with a hard drive** that can survive in a home environment – if you drop your laptop five feet what would happen? A console has to slide onto the kitchen floor an average of two times a day in some households, so this thing has to be taken care of. At the end of the day **we had the opportunity to make Xbox a little bit smaller** but it would have cost more to manufacture and would have been less robust and we decided that, you know, it's a games console. It sits there, once you've bought it, and you play games on it and you ignore it. So it is larger than other game consoles, it is heavier than other game consoles, but **it is also far more powerful than other game consoles** and it has all the online stuff built in. It turns out that a PS2 with the 600 things you have to plug into it to get online actually is **bigger, and weighs more**.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE SPEND £299 ON THE XBOX WHEN THE PLAYSTATION2 AND GAMECUBE ARE BOTH £199?

Xbox is the **same price as other next-generation consoles** when they were launched. Just because we're a year down from the Sony launch, doesn't mean that when we launch a new console, it doesn't cost that much to put out. The fact of the matter is, any of these consoles are a big investment for a gamer, right? I know that, **I was a gamer when I was a kid and I spent all of my money buying consoles**. I appreciate what a big investment it is. The most important thing that we're doing is ensuring that the titles that come out for Xbox are **surprising and excellent and beautiful**. This is the most important thing, that's the promise of Xbox. There's no other console that has the potential that Xbox does to surprise and entertain.

In the United States, there's no question that we're going to **sell every single unit that we can manufacture** over the holiday season. That's based on the fact that they were **so disappointed with other next-generation consoles**. When people bought their PS2s, and increasingly when people are buying other new consoles, you turn it on and it plays games, and

the games are not so remarkable. The games don't really push genres. You don't see things happening like in *Wreckless* or *Halo* that really surprise you. **I think the thing that's going to determine the success or failure of Xbox is if we actually deliver on the promises**. So far, we have games that are surprising, **we have games that change genres**, we have games that invent new genres, we have games that twist current genres. In *Dead or Alive 3* you can go **half a kilometre into the forest fighting** – that's incredible, it's very beautiful! And never before have you been able to feel such a connection to a game in that way. At the heart of it, that's really the special thing about Xbox, it's designed so that every program we have is driving towards the goal of **making games more creative**, making games more fun, taking interactive entertainment to another level and really surprising the audience.

ONE OF THE MAIN CRITICISMS WE'VE HEARD OF THE XBOX IS THAT THE JOYPAD IS FAR TOO LARGE AND FAR TOO CLUMSY TO USE. WHAT KIND OF R&D DID MICROSOFT DO TO DECIDE ON THE FINISHED EUROPEAN JOYPAD DESIGN?

Well, I have a theory that I've maintained for long time which I call the home brew problem. A lot of people in the US brew their own beer, and you have your friends around and you hand them one of your beers and if you say, **"Hey, I made this beer, what do you think?"** they'll sip it and say, "Pretty good for home brew". If you just hand them the beer and walk away, later they'll come and say, **"This beer is really good, what is it?"** and you say, "I brewed it myself", they'll say, "Damn! That's amazing!" Same beer, same person, **the difference is presentation**. So what's happened with the controller is we've handed it to people before they can play a game and they've evaluated it in a very knowledgeable way and said, **"Oh, this controller is crap! It's too big."** You say, "Well, have you played a game?" and they say, "No." It turns out that **when people actually play with the controller they like it a lot**, especially in the studies we've done in the US, a lot of people – a lot of journalists now, in print – have retracted their view of the controller. Does that mean it's the perfect controller for everyone? No. **Is any controller perfect for everyone?** No. We do have a Japanese controller that was specifically designed for the Japanese market, and there is a possibility that that could be brought to other markets as well. But I think that the most important thing now for Microsoft, and also for everyone else, is to **get out there and play the games** and see what they think of it for themselves. We did a tremendous amount of R&D on that controller, actually. ●



WIDE BOY

ONLINE CAPABLE RIGHT OFF THE SHELF, THE XBOX ALSO HAS THE ABILITY TO USE A BROADBAND CONNECTION – BUT WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Commonplace in America, broadband is only just picking up in the UK so it's forgivable if you have absolutely no idea what we're talking about. Put simply, broadband is a way of connecting to the Web that allows you to transport data a hell of a lot faster.

Actually, faster is a bit of an understatement because broadband allows you to transfer data around 20 times faster than your average 56K (narrowband) modem connection. So you'll be able to surf the Net a lot more quickly, but more importantly, you'll also be able to download big files at blistering speeds – a great combination with a built-in 10Gb hard drive! On the grander scale of things (beyond porn, in other words!) this means you can download add-ons or demos for games and play multiplayer carnage with no worry of slowdown.

If this sounds a little too good to be true that's because it is. As of yet broadband connections are not available in every home in the UK. If you live in a big city then this shouldn't be a problem, but if you're stuck in the middle of nowhere you will have to make do with a basic 56K connection for a long, long time to come. ●



NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

X01 MICROSOFT LAUNCH XBOX IN STYLE!

STUNNING LAUNCH EVENT IN CANNES!

Microsoft certainly know how to launch a product! The European debut for Xbox took place in the summer house of fashion designer Pierre Cardin, high in the hills

overlooking Cannes in the south of France. This house is unique – and obviously the inspiration for the Teletubbies' abode!

The collection of journalists, TV crews and developers were greeted by the primitive rhythms of a drumming troop all decked out in fluorescent outfits. Accompanying them was an obviously mad performance artist in fluorescent armour, grinding a circular saw into his groin and chest! With everyone plied with drink and wondering if the drumming would ever stop, we were released into an auditorium under the house where the big announcements were made.

Xbox will launch in the UK on 14 March 2002 and be priced at £299. Not the best price with PlayStation 2 already discounted to £199, but a great release date as many were expecting this to slip a few weeks, and there were even rumours of a September launch! Seamus Blackley, Manager of the Advanced Technology Group at Microsoft, justified the price by stating that: "Xbox is the same price as other next generation consoles when they were launched. Just because we're a year down from the Sony launch, doesn't mean that when we launch a new console, it doesn't cost that much to put out. The most important thing that we're doing is ensuring that the titles that come out for Xbox are surprising and excellent and beautiful."

The event was like playing a game in itself. Software companies were hidden away in round rooms around the rounded house, with round windows and round doors.

We were all given maps, but these soon proved to be useless so instead XBM went on a scavenger hunt in search of exclusives for this launch issue.

The big games of the show included the surprise announcement of *Wreckless* from Activision. Set in the busy Hong Kong streets you get to drive cars as recklessly as you like – smash through shopping centres, career head-on into parked cars, jump off buildings, all with realistic damage and stunning graphics. We'll have a full report on this amazing game next issue.

The other big surprise was *RalliSport Challenge* from Microsoft itself. A rally game to beat them all and fulfil the ultimate wish of all rally game fans – crash off the road and you keep on going instead of hitting that annoying invisible wall! There's a full work in progress on this game over on page 30.

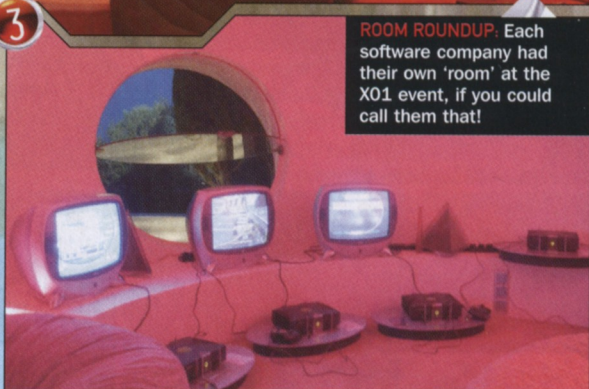
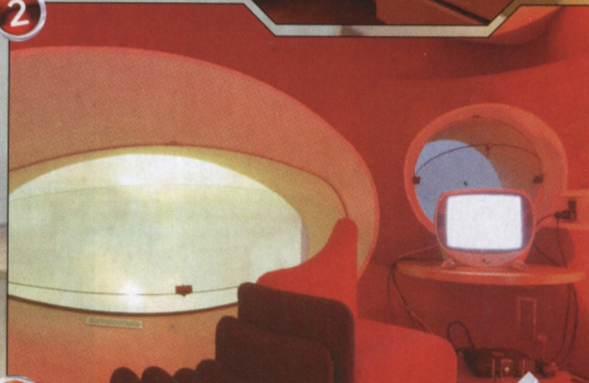
So was the event a success for Microsoft? Definitely. We danced the night away to Carl Cox in the DJ booth and people went away, having played the latest versions of the games, full of praise for the launch line-up.

How about the price point? Well, £249 would have thrown down the gauntlet to Sony and made the fight more interesting, but as a starting point £299 is okay with us.

Were there duff games that made you would be embarrassed to own? Of course! All consoles have them, and that's why it's so important that you continue to buy XBM as we'll sort the wheat from the chaff for you so you never waste your money.

But rest assured, there are some fantastic games coming your way on Xbox – and we've played them first! ●

£299
LAUNCHING
14 MARCH
2002



ROOM ROUNDUP Each software company had their own 'room' at the X01 event, if you could call them that!



PARTY ON: The Xbox launch party started with a crazy drumming troop. Quite what the residents of Cannes thought about it all is anyone's guess!



THE XBOX MEN

With talk of hard drives, price points and the infinite possibilities of Xbox, these were the men who were talking the talk. Clockwise from the top: Ed Fries, Xbox; Lorne Lanning, Oddworld Inhabitants; Sandy Duncan, Xbox; Peter Molyneux, Lionhead Studios; Seamus Blackley, Xbox; Scott Dodkins, Activision; David Gardner, EA.

“THE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT WE’RE DOING IS ENSURING THAT THE TITLES THAT COME OUT FOR XBOX ARE SURPRISING AND EXCELLENT AND BEAUTIFUL”

SEAMUS BLACKLEY, XBOX

1 SILENCE!

Konami has announced that Silent Hill 2 for the Xbox will now be named Silent Hill: Restless Dreams. This improved version of the title will include an additional game mode adding an extra six hours to the gameplay.

1 KEEP ON RUNNING

Sega has announced that it will be developing an arcade board off the back of the Xbox console. No big news you might say but one of the first games planned for this new arcade board is a sequel to none other than Out Run! At the moment this could go either way but you should keep your fingers crossed as this would mean easy Xbox arcade conversions. Nice.



1 POSH SOCCER TITLE

He's going to all the other consoles so it's little surprise that there is no escape on the Xbox! The footballer everyone loves (David Beckham, of course!) will be getting his videogame debut early next year.



1 TURNING JAPANESE

If you've read our definitive Xbox feature you'll know that the Japanese are getting a completely different, and much easier to use, pad to control their games with. Microsoft is currently looking at releasing this smaller pad in the UK as an alternative controller.



1 BIG IN CANNES

At the X01 event in Cannes, Microsoft unveiled a new game planned for the console going by the name of BC. Not much is known at the moment but it does feature huge dinosaurs and scantily clad girls, so it can't be that bad!



WRECKLESS A SURPRISE GAME FROM ACTIVISION – LOOKING MIGHTY FINE!

Shock announcement and one of the most impressive games shown at the European launch was Wreckless from Activision. The game has been added to the day one line-up and the name pretty much says it all – this

is an adrenalin-busting racer with absolutely no rules to restrict your fun. If you don't pile into corners in this mission-based driving game you're doing something wrong! Set in Hong Kong, Wreckless puts you on the

heels of the Mafia, a plot line that acts as a perfectly good excuse for some insane driving action through densely populated streets. We'll have more on this intriguing game soon.



BM NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...



THE IMMORTAL FIGHTING GAME

ON COME ON LET'S FACE IT THIS HAD TO HAPPEN EVENTUALLY!

It's the original violent gorefest fighting game that so many others tried to copy but few seemed to achieve that mindless fun element. Well like it or love it *Mortal Kombat* is returning. Despite the fairly dismal sequels it spawned on virtually every console format known to man, *Mortal Kombat* is still one of the better selling game franchises to date. It's a safe bet then that this next instalment is going to try and re-stake the claim of be one of the most advanced and blood-filled battle simulators available.



PLAY XBOX NOW!



THE XPERIENCE

WHY WAIT UNTIL MARCH TO GET YOUR HANDS ON WITH THIS COOL CONSOLE?



There is no doubt about it, the launch of the Xbox in Europe is a long way away and flicking through this magazine probably isn't helping time go any quicker! But there is a way to help stop those urges and put an end to your misery. Welcome to your saviour – the UK Xbox

Xperience. Proving that this console is rock and roll Microsoft is taking it on tour around the country starting from 17 November – a full four months before it hits the shelves! The 'Xperience' as it is called is split into three zones: a Video Zone full of video footage; a Play More Zone with consoles ready to play *Halo*, *Project*

Gotham, *Amped* and *Oddworld*; and the X Zone where you can relax or even order a console!

The venues for these special Xbox Xperience days will be open from 10am to 7pm on Saturdays and Sundays, but if you want to guarantee less queuing you can pre-register at <http://msn.co.uk/xbox/default.asp>

TOUR DATES ARE AS FOLLOWS...

LONDON XPERIENCE

Saturday 17 November – Sunday 16 December 2001

Nutopia, 42 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, WC2

MANCHESTER XPERIENCE

Saturday 1 – Sunday 2 December 2001

Freemasons Hall, 36 Bridge Street, Manchester M3

BIRMINGHAM XPERIENCE

Saturday 24 – Sunday 25 November 2001

The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Digbeth, Birmingham B9

GLASGOW XPERIENCE

Saturday 8 – Sunday 9 December 2001

The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane, Glasgow G1



CODEMASTERS JOIN THE FUN! Expect some killer games from this videogame veteran software company!



TOCA THE

BRITISH DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS



As if any proof were needed that the Xbox is going to be the top dog, a bunch of third-party developers have already given up to the Microsoft lure – including some leading UK companies.

Codemasters is one such developer and racing fans are sure to be pleased to hear that a new TOCA game is already under way.

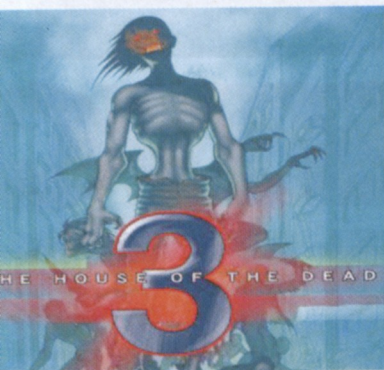
However, this isn't just another TOCA title – Codemasters is keen to push the new game, *Race Driver*, beyond a stereotypical sequel. Mixing licensed real-world racing with a fictional story, it immerses you

SEGA ON FIRE

KILLER
APPS!
XBM

TWO KILLER TITLES ADDED TO THE ALREADY HUGE SEGA LINE-UP ON XBOX...

After SEGA announced that it was going to stop production of the Dreamcast and get out of the hardware market there were lots of concerned faces. Thankfully it looks like the legendary Japanese software giant is set to become one of the best developers on Xbox – something that has been backed up by two new announcements. Now it was already common knowledge that *Crazy Taxi*, *Panzer Dragoon*, *SEGA GT*, *The House Of The Dead 3*, *Gun Valkyrie* and *Jet Set Radio Future* were on the way. But it has also been announced on top of this that *Phantasy Star Online* and *Shenmue II* are coming to the Xbox. There just aren't enough hours in the day to play this many quality titles! ●



SEGA WINNERS: From the top: *Shenmue II*, *Phantasy Star Online*, *Panzer Dragoon* and *House of the Dead 3*.



REPORTING XBOX HAPPENINGS FROM AROUND THE WORLD...

A LEADS CHARGE

STERS ANNOUNCES ITS BIG PLANS FOR THE XBOX...

into a cut-throat racing world where you have to perform both on and off the track. Hopefully this will set a trend and force other developers to use official licenses more effectively.

Joining TOCA in the coming year is an exclusive to Xbox title called *Ultimate: Blade Of Darkness* – an action adventure based on the PC game *Severance*. Also in the works are a couple of sports games: *Mike Tyson Heavyweight Boxing* and a new *LMA Manager* title. Looks to be a very busy year ahead for Codemasters. ●



XBM
XTRA!

1 IT'S REIGNING GAMES

It's good to see some of the great movie licenses being turned into games – like *The Thing*. However, some hot new movies have been snapped up and fantasy dragon flick *Reign of Fire* is one of them. The game should closely follow the film, which is full of huge fire-breathing dragons – nice!

1 BROKEN GAMES

Developer Revolution has confirmed its hugely successful adventure series *Broken Sword* will be getting a sequel on the Xbox. The previous two games were point-and-click games but this control system is being ditched for the new game.



1 WE KNOW KUNG FU

A smash hit at the cinema, *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* converted an obscene amount of film watchers over to the Hong Kong style. It hardly comes as any surprise then that the film is getting a videogame made in its honour. Look out for more on this soon.



1 GET IN THE RING

A boxing simulation without real fighters in it? That would be Rocky. Yes the main man Belloc and his chums like Apollo Creed and Ivan Drago are coming to the Xbox. Now some may say it's a brutal sport, but those in the know realise it's just like chess with fists.



1 ARE YOU READY TU-ROK?

If you owned a Nintendo 64 then you'll probably have heard of a game called *Turok* – a great first-person shooter set in jungles filled with dinosaurs. Well now there's a new game in development from Acclaim for next generation systems and you can bet it will keep up the tradition.

FLAT ZOMBIES

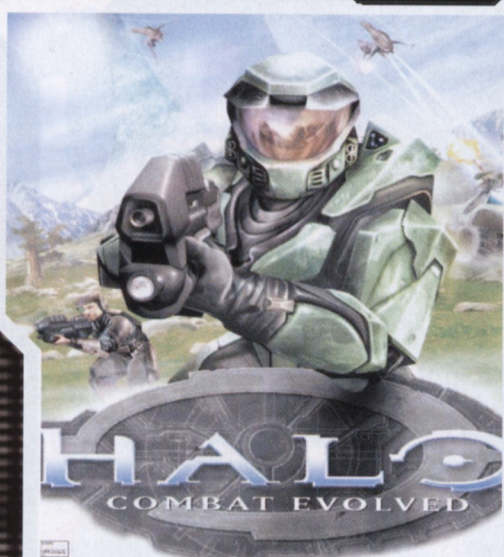
ARGUABLY ONE OF THE GREATEST SHOOTING GAMES EVER MADE AND IT'S COMING TO XBOX!

We've lost count the number of times we played through *The House of the Dead 2* in the arcades. Our fingers still twitch to this day! Well, now you're going to get your accuracy skills tested again as a sequel rears its ugly head. As you've probably already guessed from these first two screens, the decision has been made to flatten the game out into a stylised mix of 2D and 3D by using cell shading. This is sure to wipe the smile off a few faces, but we think it looks great.

And it could look even better as developer WOW is giving gamers the chance to have their image put in the game! Go to <http://score.sega.com/games/HOD3/contest/> to find out more about the competition and the latest on this top shooter.

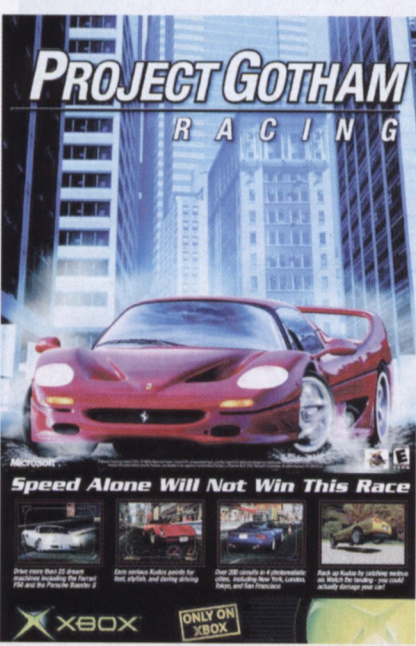


WANTING TO BE FAMOUS? Do you want to be famous?



SO CLOSE YOU CAN ALMOST REACH OUT AND CARESS THE PLASTIC CASES!

JUDGING BY C



By the time you read this countless numbers of smug Americans will have their sweaty hands on an Xbox pad, thrashing about on one of the many superb launch games. Sadly, we've got to wait until 14 March to enjoy such pleasures, but until then the more impatient of you can enjoy this US box art. Odds are these DVD-style cases are going to stay pretty much the same for the UK release, complete with the stylish black

strip and green bubbly Xbox logo. Microsoft is also using the packaging to brag about the console exclusive games. Titles including *Amped*, *Halo*, *Oddworld* and *Project Gotham Racing* all feature an 'only on Xbox' stamp! It's not long now till the UK release, but until then you may want to cut out these tiny boxes as a placebo. Figure out exactly where you're going to position them in your room and change wall colours accordingly! ●

XBM XPLAINED!

This issue of **XBM** is a showcase of the best Xbox has to offer. We've put together exclusive work in progress features and previews of the top Xbox games and included all kinds of useful information for you. Here's a full explanation of what's going on on those pages...

WORK IN PROGRESS



BOX OUTS
In a 'work in progress' we'll bring you early sketches of characters, wireframes of the maps, any production materials that we managed to get out of the developers. We'll also put any interviews we've done with the team behind the game in here.

IT'S LIKE
To give you some idea of what to expect, we choose two things this game is like a cross between. These can be anything from games and movies to television and music.

DEVELOPER HISTORY
What games have these developers done before that you might know? We tell you here.

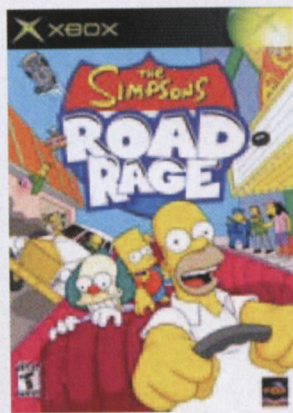
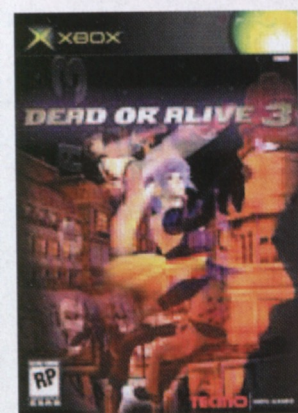
HARD SELL
We get this text from a press release on the game, or ask the developer to tell us what it is that makes this game different.

INFORMATION
All the essential stuff is in here - publisher, developer, genre then we give you an expected release date (because they're likely to change) and tell you how long this game has been in development.

THE PEOPLE!



OVERS



WANNA BE WIREFREE?

THE FUTURE'S ORANGE

Since June, when Orange launched its dedicated wirefree gaming division, the company has pioneered a new era in gaming. If you're not at home with your PlayStation2 and you've forgotten your Game Boy Advance, you can still get a fix of gaming on your mobile phone!

Both WAP and SMS games are available to registered users with titles like WAP Boxing, WAP Dungeon and the Grand Prix SMS game, where you get to answer questions about the Orange Arrows F1 team – and it's already a blinding success. Orange has built up a following of over 350,000 WAP gamers in a few short months!

The latest, and most sophisticated, game for WAP is *Dinoland*. Taking its queue from the phenomenal success of *Pokémon*, in *Dinoland* you must care for and nurture a baby dinosaur,

training it to fight other dinos, cleaning it and feeding it while exploring the rugged island terrain. There are 45 species of dinosaur to capture, some of these are easy to find and others only come out at night, so you'll have to use cunning and patience to 'catch 'em all'! While mobile phone technology is improving all the time, it's good to see Orange leading the way to a whole new world of videogaming. Colour mobile screens and more sophisticated games are on the horizon, but if you're looking to while away a few minutes on a boring journey, then Orange have a good selection of games just waiting on the other end of the line!



1 FLY KILLER

First-person shooter lovers everywhere rejoice because Sierra (the company that brought you *Half-Life*) has announced *SWAT: Global Strike Team*. A counter terrorism game, Argonaut is developing this and if you've played previous titles you'll know it's going to be hot.

1 EYE SPY

It's been confirmed that one of the biggest videogame remakes of our time is coming to the Xbox – none other than *Spy Hunter*. The classic, reborn by Midway, was an immense amount of fun on the PlayStation2 and should suit the Xbox system well.



1 CRISIS SITUATION

It may come as a surprise, considering its roots, but *Dino Crisis 3* has been announced as an 'exclusive to Xbox only' title! Originally a PSone-only game, this survival horror isn't out for ages yet, but we're going to throw caution to the wind and call this a guaranteed hit.

1 DROP AN E

Already out on the PC *eRacer* is an extremely fun to play rally-style racing game designed mainly for online use – hence the name. Now it's on the way to the Xbox and should be perfectly suited to the task. What with the console being online out the box and all.

PREVIEW

INFORMATION

Once again, all the essentials, only this time with the number of players added and a weblink that will take you directly to an official Internet page on the game.

TOTALGAMES.NET XBM

We've got our own Web site set up, where we'll post any movies, wallpaper, extra screenshots or the full transcript of interviews so you can download them if you wish.

WHAT IF...

This is where we give the developers a few pointers and ask ourselves, "What if they added such and such to the game!"

BASH, BASH OR GLIDE!

THE NEW RACING GAME FROM THE DEVELOPERS OF THE HIT GAME BASH, BASH OR GLIDE!

Each of the characters that you can choose from has a very distinctive personality!

POSSERS! WITH BELLS ON!

MAD DASH RACING

CRASH BANDICOOT MEETS DIDDY KONG RACING...

ONE TO WATCH! XBM!

IN CLOSE-UP

We point out the finer details of Xbox gaming.

1ST OPINION

So, now that we've played the preview version of Xbox game X, what is our first opinion? You'll find it here!



THE ULTIMATE RELEASES



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XBOX

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

Check out the up-to-the-minute release schedule live on our very own XBM Web site. Just point your browser to the above URL and marvel at all the games coming soon on Xbox!

TOTAL GAMES net XBM	
<p>UPCOMING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 09/10/01 09/11/01 09/12/01 10/01/01 10/02/01 10/03/01 10/04/01 10/05/01 10/06/01 10/07/01 10/08/01 10/09/01 10/10/01 10/11/01 10/12/01 11/01/01 11/02/01 11/03/01 11/04/01 11/05/01 11/06/01 11/07/01 11/08/01 11/09/01 11/10/01 11/11/01 11/12/01 12/01/01 12/02/01 12/03/01 12/04/01 12/05/01 12/06/01 12/07/01 12/08/01 12/09/01 12/10/01 12/11/01 12/12/01 	<p>COMING SOON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 09/10/01 09/11/01 09/12/01 10/01/01 10/02/01 10/03/01 10/04/01 10/05/01 10/06/01 10/07/01 10/08/01 10/09/01 10/10/01 10/11/01 10/12/01 11/01/01 11/02/01 11/03/01 11/04/01 11/05/01 11/06/01 11/07/01 11/08/01 11/09/01 11/10/01 11/11/01 11/12/01 12/01/01 12/02/01 12/03/01 12/04/01 12/05/01 12/06/01 12/07/01 12/08/01 12/09/01 12/10/01 12/11/01 12/12/01

DATE XBOX SCHEDULE

THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE YOU
NEED TO LOOK FOR ALL THE UP-
TO-DATE RELEASE INFORMATION
FOR XBOX, AND THAT'S RIGHT
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EVERY TIME WE FIND OUT NEW
RELEASE INFORMATION WE POST
IT DIRECTLY ON OUR WEB SITE AT
XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET — THEN IN
EACH ISSUE OF XBM YOU WILL
FIND THE UPDATED FULL LIST,
WITH ALL THE MOST ANTICIPATED
GAMES HIGHLIGHTED. YOU NEED
NEVER LOOK ANYWHERE ELSE!





Amped Freestyle Snowboarding



Azurik: Rise Of Perathia



Colin McRae Rally



Dead Or Alive 3



Falcone: Into The Maelstrom



Grand Theft Auto 3



Jet Set Radio Future

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE
4X4 Evolution 2	Take2	Spring 2002
Air Force Delta Storm	Konami	14 March 2002
Amped Freestyle Snowboarding	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Apprentice Wizards	Microids	Winter 2002
Arctic Thunder	Midway	Spring 2002
Antz Racing	Empire Interactive	TBA
Aquaman	TDK Interactive	TBA
Azurik: Rise Of Perathia	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Batman Vengeance	Ubi Soft	Spring 2002
Barbarians	Virgin Interactive	TBA
BC	Microsoft	TBA
Blood Omen 2	Eidos	TBA
Blood Wake	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Brainbox	Capcom	TBA
Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon	Revolution	TBA
Brute Force	Microsoft	Autumn 2002
Bruce Lee: Quest Of The Dragon	Microsoft	TBA
Buffy The Vampire Slayer	Fox Interactive	14 March 2002
Bushido Blade X	Squaresoft	TBA
Cel Damage	EA	14 March 2002
Circus Maximus	Encore Software	Spring 2002
Crash	Rage	Spring 2002
Colin McRae Rally	Codemaster	Autumn 2002
Commandos 2	Eidos	TBA
Conflict Desert Storm	SCI	Spring 2002
Crazy Taxi: Next	SEGA	TBA
Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon	Ubi Soft	TBA
Dark Summit	THQ	Spring 2002
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	Acclaim	Spring 2002
David Beckham Soccer	Rage	Spring 2002
Dead Or Alive 3	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Deadly Skies	Konami	Spring 2002
Dino Crisis 3	Capcom	TBA
Defender	Midway	TBA
Dr Muto	Midway	TBA
Duality	Phantagram	Winter 2002
Downforce	Titus	TBA
e-Racer	Rage	Summer 2002
Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind	Bethesda Softworks	TBA
Enclave	Conspiracy Games	TBA
ESPN NBA 2Night 2002	Konami	TBA
ESPN National Hockey Night 2002	Konami	TBA
Fantastic Four	Activision	TBA
Farmation	SEGA	TBA
Falcone: Into The Maelstrom	Virgin Interactive	TBA
Final Fantasy XI	Squaresoft	TBA
Freaky Flyers	Midway	Spring 2002
Fuzion Frenzy	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Galleon	Interplay	Spring 2002
Genma Onimusha	Capcom	Summer 2002
Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft	TBA
Giants X	Interplay	TBA
Good Cop Bad Cop	Revolution	Autumn 2002
Gun Valkyrie	SEGA	TBA
Gun Metal	Rage	Spring 2002
Gravity Games: Street, Vert, Dirt	Midway	TBA
Grand Theft Auto 3	Take2	Spring 2002
G-Surfers	Blade Interactive	TBA
Halo	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Hunter: The Reckoning	Interplay	Spring 2002
House Of The Dead 3	SEGA	TBA
Ironstorm	Wanado	Spring 2002
Ironman	Activision	TBA
Jackie Chan Adventures	Activision	TBA
Jet Set Radio Future	SEGA	Spring 2002
Jonny Drama	Sierra	TBA
Jurassic Park X	Konami	TBA
Kabuki Warriors	Crave	TBA
Kengo: Legacy Of The Blade	Crave	TBA
Kao Kangaroo	Virgin Interactive	Spring 2002
Kingdom Under Fire 2	Phantagram	TBA
La Femme Nikita	Infogrames	TBA

Air Force
Delta Storm

BC

Cel Damage

Dark Summit

Fuzion Frenzy

Halo

Kao Kangaroo



Max Payne



Moto GP



Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee



Rallisport Challenge



Simpsons Road Rage



TOCA Race Driver



Wreckless

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE
Loons	Infogrames	Winter 2002
LMA Manager	Codemasters	Winter 2002
Mad Dash	Eidos	Spring 2002
Master Rallye	Microïds	TBA
Max Payne	Take2	TBA
Malice	Sierra Studios	Spring 2002
Metal Gear Solid X	Konami	TBA
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	14 March 2002
Minority Report	Activision	TBA
Mission Impossible 2	Infogrames	TBA
Medal Of Honor: Allied Assault	EA	Summer 2002
Mortal Kombat	Midway	TBA
Moto GP	THQ	TBA
Nascar Heat	Infogrames	Summer 2002
New Legends	THQ	Spring 2002
NFL Fever 2002	Microsoft	Spring 2002
NFL Blitz 20-02	Midway	Spring 2002
NHL Hitz 20-02	Midway	Spring 2002
NHL 2002	EA	Q2 2002
Nightcaster	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Panzer Dragoon	SEGA	TBA
Phantasy Star Online	SEGA	TBA
Pirates Of Skull Cove	EA	TBA
Project Ego	Microsoft	TBA
Project Gotham Racing	Microsoft	14 March 2002
Project K-X (Fighting Super Heroes)	Microsoft	TBA
Race Of Champions	Activision	TBA
Rayman M	Ubi Soft	TBA
Rayman Arena	Ubi Soft	Summer 2002
Rallisport Challenge	Microsoft	Spring 2002
Rally Trophy	JoWood	Spring 2002
Reign Of Fire	BAM Entertainment	Summer 2002
Ridge Racer X	Namco	TBA
Rocky	Rage	TBA
Sam And Max	Activision	TBA
Sgt. Cruise	Virgin Interactive	TBA
SEGA GT 2002	SEGA	Spring 2002
Shenmue II	SEGA	TBA
Shining Lore	Phantagram	Summer 2002
Shrek	TDK Interactive	14 March 2002
Silent Hill 2: Directors Cut	Konami	TBA
Simpsons Road Rage	EA	14 March 2002
SK8	Rage	Winter 2002
SSX Tricky	EA	14 March 2002
Soul Caliber 2	Namco	TBA
Spiderman	Activision	TBA
Spy Hunter	Midway	TBA
Star Wars: Obi-Wan	LucasArts	14 March 2002
Star Wars: Starfighter SE	LucasArts	Spring 2002
Strident Shadowfront	Phantagram	Winter 2002
Superman	Infogrames	TBA
SWAT: Global Strike Team	Sierra	Winter 2002
Test Drive Off Road: Wide Open	Infogrames	14 March 2002
The Thing	Universal	Summer 2002
The Matrix	Interplay	TBA
TimeSplitters2	Eidos	TBA
TOCA Race Driver	Codemasters	Summer 2002
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	Spring 2002
Transworld Skateboarding	Infogrames	Autumn 2002
Transworld Snowboarding	Infogrames	Autumn 2002
Transworld Surfing	Infogrames	14 March 2002
Turok Evolution	Acclaim	Autumn 2002
UFC Tapout	Crave	Spring 2002
Unreal Championship	Infogrames	Summer 2002
Ultimate: Blade Of Darkness	Codemasters	Winter 2002
Warhammer 40K	THQ	Winter 2002
Wreckless	Activision	14 March 2002
WWF Raw Is War	THQ	Summer 2002
Worms Blast	Ubi Soft	Summer 2002
X Games Snowboarding 2	Konami	TBA
Yager	THQ	TBA

Malice

Mortal Kombat

Project Ego

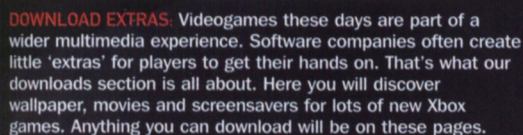
Project Gotham Racing

Shrek

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Unreal Championship

YOU'RE ALREADY HOLDING THE DEFINITIVE READ FOR ALL WOULD-BE XBOX USERS, BUT OUR DEDICATION TO BRING YOU EVERYTHING XBOX DOESN'T STOP WITH THIS FINE MAGAZINE. WE'VE ALSO GOT OUR VERY OWN WEB SITE WHERE YOU CAN GET A DAILY UPDATE ON WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THIS GREAT NEW CONSOLE.



HOME PAGE: The main XBM home page at xbox.totalgames.net gives you a complete summary of what's going on with the Web site. From here you can see the daily updated news stories and click on them to get the full text. You can go directly to reviews and previews of the games you're curious about, and check out the features section, which includes interviews with some of the biggest movers and shakers in Xbox land. All that and competitions too!

**“VIDEOGAMES THESE DAYS ARE
PART OF A WIDER MULTIMEDIA
EXPERIENCE”**

XBM X-PERTS

WE'VE GATHERED TOGETHER VIDEOGAME JOURNALISTS FROM A VARIETY OF GAMING BACKGROUNDS AND GIVEN THEM THE TOUGH TASK OF PLAYING ALL THE NEW XBOX GAMES. HERE'S WHAT THEY THINK OF THE CONSOLE SO FAR...

MIKE RICHARDSON



This is probably about to sound like blatant propaganda but **I think the Xbox has got the strongest launch line-up ever** seen. And that's saying something considering **I was initially a sceptic!** It also looks like there are a lot of quality titles due after day one – bring on the revolution.

MARTIN MATHERS



Considering I had initial doubts over the console itself, **the Xbox has impressed me so far.** There are more than enough amazing-looking games on the way to keep a wide range of videogamers happy and **even the price point isn't that bad...** look at the PlayStation2. **It seems Xbox will be great** after all...

SIMON CANN



According to many misguided individuals the Xbox is 'dead before arrival'. **In short, this is nonsense,** especially when you consider most of the aforementioned gloom-mongers **haven't even seen the machine running.** Well, we have, and make no mistake, of the three major next-gen consoles this is **by far the most technically advanced system.**

What's more, with one of the healthiest launch line-ups ever, the future looks very bright for Microsoft's wonder-console.

WILL JOHNSTON



I expect a multi-level media campaign for the launch of Xbox that will **make the launch of Windows 95 seem like the declaration of Heinz's 57th variety,** but without some killer apps this will all be for naught. **"Developers, developers, developers!"** the sweaty Steve Balmer enthused. I'd be happier if he could **just promise me one truly innovative game to play** – and I'm not thinking third-person adventures here either.

NERYS COWARD



Unfortunately, **I haven't been blown away by what I've seen so far** but the fact that several big licences, including *Buffy* and *Munch's Oddysee*, **have aligned themselves wholly with the console** demonstrates that the Xbox is a console about which developers can get excited. If you compare the quality of the

PlayStation2 launch titles to those available now, **you'll see a huge advance in quality** – which will happen with Xbox too.

JEM ROBERTS



Well, of course the games we've seen so far look AMAZING, especially *Simpsons Road Rage* and *Oddworld*, but speaking as a good honest pauper and part-time communist, **I'd still like the Xbox to fail miserably,** sending Microsoft into spiralling debt and totally **bankrupting Bill Gates.** But that's just my opinion, you understand.

MIKE O'SULLIVAN



I think the Xbox is going to be **the console the world has been waiting for** – a machine with the capabilities for massive multiplayer online gaming, backed up by companies with the knowledge and experience required to make that a reality. **Xbox is going to take console gaming online** in ways that the Dreamcast could only dream of.

ROY KIMBER



I have to admit I was sceptical when I heard 'Big Bill' was moving into the console market, but **so far every game I've seen has been awesome!** If the games we've looked at in this issue are anything to go by then **the PlayStation2 is gonna be nowt but a memory within about a year** of the Xbox launching!

NET

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Feeding Gamers P2

Xbox Release Schedule
Your guide to upcoming Xbox games, updated daily

Month	Game	Publisher	Genre	Release Date
October 2001				
November 2001				
December 2001				
January 2002				
February 2002				
March 2002				
April 2002				

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UPDATED RELEASES: Want to find out when an Xbox game is to be released? Well, our online release schedule will tell you. Whenever we receive new release information our Games Editor Mike Richardson puts it directly onto the Web site so you are as up-to-date as we are. You can even click on the game name on the list and go directly to a preview to whet your appetite.

PLUS!

There's so much more to come from TotalGames.net **XBM**. Our first reviews of the American Xbox launch games will soon be up on the site, and you will find complete solutions to the toughest games here too. Keep checking back as there'll be something new to see every day!

£3.20! THE UK'S PREMIER UNOFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR XBOX GAMING!

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XBM

PLAY-TESTED!

X MARKS THE SPOT!

Xbox is reality! All the games, all the specs, all the secrets revealed!

FEATURED!

ODDWORLD MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

HALLO! Abe's adventure continues on a console with power to impress!

14 PAGES OF ESSENTIAL XBOX NEWS AND RELEASE DATES

46 NEW GAMES SCRUTINISED, PREVIEWED AND PLAYED

PLUS!

DEAD OR ALIVE 3

144 XBOX GAMES INSIDE!

PREVIEWED!

HALO

First person shooter in color!

STAR WARS

Project Gotham

TOURNAISON

SHENMUE 2

IT'S LIKE...



COLIN MCRAE RALLY
...MEETS...



EUROSPORT

TEXT BY: NICK ROBERTS

YOU WILL NEVER HAVE PLAYED A
RALLY GAME THIS REALISTIC BEFORE!

RIP UP THE ROAD!

RALLISPORT CHALLENGE

INFORMATION

Publisher	Microsoft
Developer	Digital Illusions
Genre	Racing
Release date	14 March
How long in development?	13 months

HARD SELL

**"RALLISPORT CHALLENGE WILL
PROVIDE THE MOST REALISTIC
AND MOST FUN RACING
EXPERIENCE EVER"**

Microsoft press release



One of the surprise announcements at the X01 Xbox launch event in Cannes was this game, *RalliSport Challenge*. It wowed the assembled crowd with photo-realistic visuals and some amazing action – the kind of thing we've all come to expect from rendered FMV sequences, but this is all in-game!

Digital Illusions are the people behind the game, under the guidance of Peter Wong from the Racing Games Group at Microsoft. Between them they are packing four different kinds of rallying into *RalliSport Challenge*. Ice Racing, RallyCross, Hill Climb and WRC-style rallies are all available for the hardened rally fan. There are 25 licensed cars to race, with top manufacturers Audi, Mitsubishi, Ford and Lancia all handing over their specs. The cars have accurate damage and handling, plus there's the promise of hidden cars to uncover if you're good enough!

A Career mode will provide you with the ultimate rally challenge, while multiplayer games for up to four players have been developed, and the speed of the Xbox makes these a joy to play.

Planned as a launch game in the UK, you'll all be playing *RalliSport Challenge* for yourselves in March! ●

YEE-HA! As you can drive further off the track than in any rally game before, you can end up in some very tricky situations!

RALLISPORT CHALLENGE

SUN IN YOUR EYES: Some of the replays in the game are truly stunning – you will think you're watching the WRC on Eurosport!



DUSTY ROADS: The level of detail crammed into this game is truly out of this world. *Rallisport Challenge* will set a new standard!



EXTREME CLOSE-UP! Each rally car is perfectly modelled on actual manufacturer data, and has a full damage map so you can smash the car to pieces!



Program Manager

PETER WONG

"ALL THE TREES ARE INDIVIDUALLY CREATED AND YOU CAN DRIVE OVER ALL THE SMALLER BUSHES AND HEDGES"

DEVELOPER HISTORY



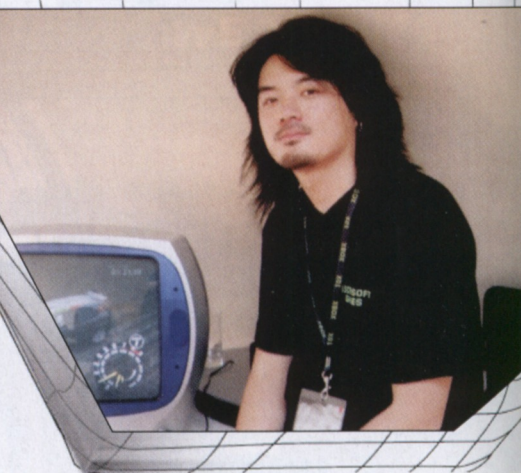
MOTORHEAD [PS] 1998 EMERORS NEW GROOVE [GBC] 2000 DISNEY'S DINOSAUR [PS] 2000

X01 INTERVIEW

We tracked down the Program Manager of Microsoft's Racing Games Group, **Peter Wong**, at the recent X01 European launch of the Xbox and grilled him about this amazing -looking rally game...

ONE FRUSTRATION WITH RALLY GAMES HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE INVISIBLE WALLS YOU HIT WHEN YOU TRY TO GO OFF THE TRACK. CAN YOU GO COMPLETELY OFF THE TRACK IN THIS GAME?

You can go quite far off the beaten track, but **what we've tried to do, especially for multiplayer**, is not let people drive too far off the track otherwise **they start cheating**, so we've introduced a little bit of a **penalty**. **If you go too far off the track**, it will start you from zero velocity again. **All the trees are individually created** and you can drive over all the smaller bushes and hedges, which is one difference between *Rallisport Challenge* and other rally games – **they all bend when you hit them, snow and leaves will fall off**. We've really done a lot with particle effects in this game. ▶





RUGGED REPLAYS: Okay, so a view like this is from a replay mode, but it's still Xbox doing all the hard work!



OFFICIAL CARS: Manufacturers have given up their data, so all the cars have official graphics and sponsors.



A WINTER'S TALE...

You'll get to race in the rain, wind, snow and ice... all perfectly recreated inside the Xbox!

1



2



3



4



5



6



"EVEN THOUGH
HAVE A REPAIR
TIME IN THE G

▶ CAN YOU RACE AGAINST A GHOST CAR AS IN GREAT GAMES LIKE SEGA RALLY?

Yes, in Time Attack mode **you do have a ghost car** that you can race against – it is created from your fastest lap.

HOW MANY TRACKS ARE THERE AND ARE THEY BASED ON REAL-LIFE TRACKS AT ALL?

There are plans for **over 25 tracks**, but the game is not finished yet so we're putting the finishing touches on it right now, designing all the final tracks. They're not based on real-life but they are **modelled after real locations** in terms of how they look, the types of surfaces and the types of vegetation.

IF THERE WAS ONE THING YOU CAN SAY SETS RALLISPORT CHALLENGE APART, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I think the variety, and **we focus mainly on the driving experience**. Even though you can damage cars we don't have a repair mode, so you're not spending time in the garage repairing your cars. There's **no money to worry about** upgrading your car. You're basically driving the cars as they race.

IF YOU CAN SMASH THE CARS UP, DOES PERFORMANCE DETERIORATE AS THE CARS ARE DAMAGED?

Yes, as you drive along and damage the car **you will hear the sounds change** and **you'll see panels deform**.





CRASH TEST DUMMIES: With a full damage map on each car, messing up is going to look spectacular!

DETAIL

IN THE GRASS: Each tree, bush, hedge and blade of grass is individually rendered on-screen, and you can drive over the smaller obstacles and crush them!

YOU CAN DAMAGE CARS WE DON'T MODE, SO YOU'RE NOT SPENDING AGE REPAIRING YOUR CARS"

OUT OF ALL THE RALLY GAMES ON THE MARKET TODAY WHICH DO YOU SEE AS YOUR MAIN COMPETITORS?

Well, **the market is pretty well defined.** You've got Colin McRae, you've got V-Rally, those are the big sellers really, and **SEGA Rally also does well in certain markets.** A lot of these games are simulating the WRC, and what we've tried to do is include these types of events, but add other ones to. **You don't see those other games featuring ice racing** or hill climb events – hill climbing events especially. *Gran Turismo* has Pike's Peak, but to really have a lot of tracks featuring these kinds of events on all different surfaces is very unique to *RalliSport Challenge*. **We've done a lot of play-testing** with a lot of focus groups of consumers, and we discovered that some **people enjoyed playing full rallies**, but others didn't want to have to race through a ten-minute stage where you wreck your car. So we've tried to make the game **a lot more fun for most people.**

THE SOUND EFFECTS ARE AMAZING – ARE YOU USING 3D AUDIO IN THIS GAME AT ALL?

Yes, we are using 3D audio. We also **support Dolby 5.1 surround sound.** We've gone to a lot of trouble to make sure all of the **sounds are as accurate as possible.** **We've been to rally events, we've attended team garages,** we've put cars on rolling roads to record them there and we've even **been out to junkyards just to record smashing windows** and broken body panels. ●

WE THINK

There's no denying, this game will have all videogame rally fans slaving at the mouth! It looks amazing, plays great and has everything you could want from a top-notch rally simulation. We can't wait for a review copy!



CHECKPOINT: Microsoft is working hard to make this a non-stop rally game. There's no garage to tinker with the cars – it's just solid driving!

work in progress
PROJECT EGO

DEVELOPER HISTORY



BLACK & WHITE [PC] 2001



THEME PARK [ALL] 1994

HARD SELL

"CREATE YOUR OWN LIFE STORY FROM CHILDHOOD TO DEATH. GROW FROM AN INEXPERIENCED CHILD INTO THE MOST POWERFUL BEING IN THE WORLD. CHOOSE THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS OR DEDICATE YOUR LIFE TO EVIL. MUSCLES EXPAND WITH EACH FEAT OF STRENGTH AND FORCE OF WILL INCREASES WITH EACH WORK OF WIT. OBESITY FOLLOWS GLUTTONY. SKIN TANS WITH EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT, AND BLEACHES BONE-WHITE BY MOONLIGHT. EARN SCARS IN BATTLE AND LINES OF EXPERIENCE WITH AGE. EACH PERSON YOU AID, EACH FLOWER YOU CRUSH, EACH CREATURE YOU SLAY WILL CHANGE THIS WORLD FOREVER. WHO WILL YOU BE?"

Microsoft press release

WORDS: NICK ROBERTS

IT COULD BE THE RPG TO END THEM ALL!

PROJECT EGO

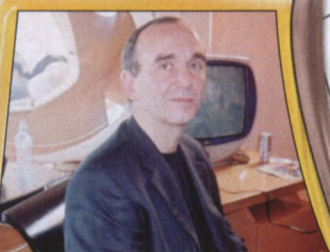
TEARING UP THE RPG RULE BOOK, THE MASTER OF VIDEOGAMES LENDS HIS HAND TO A NEW GENERATION OF GAME ON THE XBOX...

INFORMATION

Publisher	Microsoft
Developer	Big Blue Box Studios
Genre	Role-playing
Release date	2002
How long in development?	1 year, 6 months

REDEFINING
RPGS
XBOX

PETER MOLYNEUX



"WE'RE REDEFINING THE RPG GENRE"



Mysterious. That's the only word to describe the new game from Big Blue Box Studios, a satellite development company of Lionhead Studios where videogame guru Peter Molyneux works. If you're a videogames fan you've undoubtedly played some of Peter's games, *Theme Park*, *Populous*, *Magic Carpet* and *Black & White* being some of the most famous. He's well-known for creating his own videogame genres and pushing the envelope to give a more intense and engrossing experience. So, couple this desire with the power of Xbox and a vision to redefine the role-playing game and you know this is not going to be any run-of-the-mill game!

X01 INTERVIEW

We sat down with Peter Molyneux at Microsoft's X01 event in Cannes and asked him to explain a little more about *Project Ego*...

SO, WHAT MAKES PROJECT EGO STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD?

The ambition with *Project Ego*, and it is a very ambitious thing, is to **make the greatest role-playing game of all time**, and to try and think of ways to slightly redefine what the role-playing genre is. I've been playing role-playing games all my life, **the first game I ever played was a role-playing game**, and I think the idea of having a role-playing game where you can be who you want to be, not who I want you to be as a designer, is **very, very cool**.



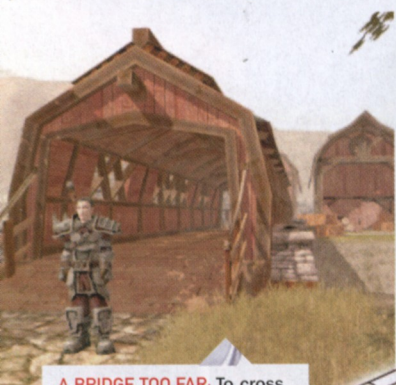
BRICK WORK: The level of detail in all the houses, buildings, backgrounds and landscapes is breathtaking.



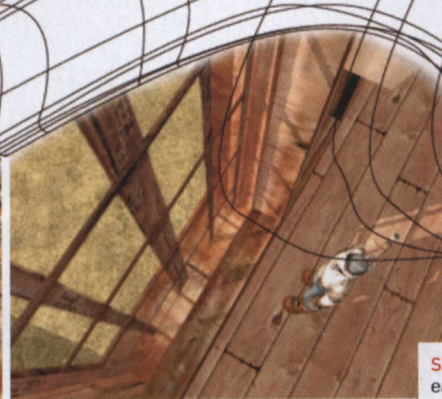
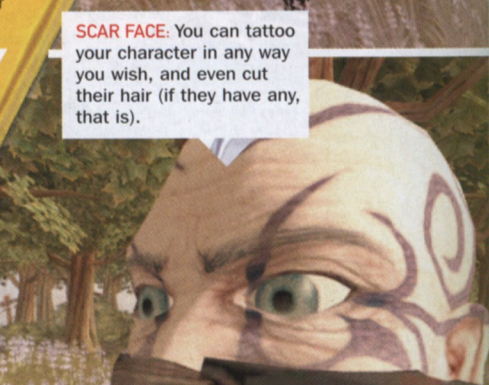
WE THINK

From the tantalising glimpses we've been given of *Project Ego* it certainly looks the part. The level of detail in the visuals is truly unique and the way any action you make in the game causes a reaction either in your character or the environment is superb. Another winner from Mr Molyneux.

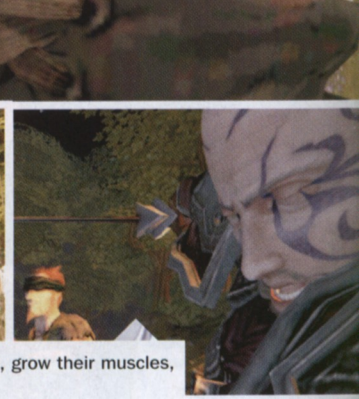
SCAR FACE: You can tattoo your character in any way you wish, and even cut their hair (if they have any, that is).



A BRIDGE TOO FAR: To cross or not to cross... oh go on, be a devil!



SHOT IN THE DARK: The characters react to pain, grow their muscles, eat and drink and get fatter or thinner!



SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO IN THIS GAME THAT CAN'T BE DONE IN OTHER RPGS?

You can **change what your character wears**, you can have conversations with people, you can compete with other heroes in the world – and that's a really important development. Just that one idea, that **you are not the only adventurer** going around, that there are other people going around in the world, **I think is a very important development**. Going into a village and that village saying: "We're getting pounded by these bandits", and then seeing another hero climbing up the mountainside getting to those bandits and **realising that they're going to get the fame for it and not you** – I think that is a really, really strong idea.

PLEASE EXPLAIN SOME OF THE SPECIAL ELEMENTS THAT GO TOGETHER TO MAKE PROJECT EGO ON XBOX TO UNIQUE.

Obviously **we're trying to make it as beautiful and realistic as possible**, trying to focus on the details like the clock moving around, shadows on the sun dials move around, **there's a real star map** used for the stars in the sky – you can recognise the star systems and the moon and sun will set and rise. Those are **all things that you should expect from a game now**.

The project is really coming along, we're starting to think about the combat system. There are two sides to the combat system. One is that **you can use almost anything as a weapon**. There are obvious things like swords and bows and arrows, but you should be able to enchant and use anything as a weapon. For example, **you can choose a saucepan**. It's a heavy thing, and it's got properties to it. We want a really simple combat system, trying to keep the button presses down to a minimum. The other thing is the use of will. **We have a magic system based upon willpower** – the idea is that when you've developed the willpower enough, you should be able to pick the character up and take them hundreds of meters into the air. The more you concentrate on using willpower, the weaker your character will get. **One of**

the things that aggravates me about role-playing games is that I might want to get to the top of a hill and I have to walk all the way up the path to get to the top. One thing you can use your willpower for is to **teleport yourself to places**.

WHERE DO YOU SEE VIDEOGAMES MOVING OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS WITH TECHNOLOGY LIKE XBOX NOW A REALITY?

It is insanely hard to make games these days. The big difference in the games industry that's happened over the last two years is that suddenly we've got amazing graphics, I mean **incredible and amazing graphics**. But also we've got amazing physical environments. You should be able to do some crazy things. You should be able to carve your name on a little tiny sapling, and you should be able to come back to that tree in 20 years time in the game, and it should have expanded and you will still see your name in there. **People are going to expect these things** more and more. Another cool thing in *Project Ego* is that you should also be able to go up to a little kid, cut up him on the cheek and you will see blood come out. You can then go away from that village and come back twenty years later, and that kid has grown up, he's now in his twenties, but **he's got a scar on his cheek** and he remembers you, and his family remembers you – that is an immersive world, that's what you can do with this simulation.

WHAT HAS REALLY IMPRESSED YOU THE MOST ABOUT XBOX?

Well, that it's out finally! It's a pretty impressive thing, I have to say. It was two years ago this spec came around and we thought, **"Absolutely fantastic, this is going to be great**, but it's never going to come out". I think the fact that Microsoft was brave enough to put a hard disc in there is great. For me, **the hard disc is probably the most important bit of the Xbox**. That sounds bizarre, but both of the games we're doing are totally reliant on the hard disc and they are going to be impossible to do on other machines. **I would like the price to be lower**, I would like it to be a little bit smaller – it is the size of a small Japanese village – but these are minor gripes. ●

TRANSFORMERS IN DISGUISE!

GUN METAL

IT'S A ROBOT. NO, WAIT A SECOND... IT'S A PLANE? OH WHO CARES, IT KICKS ASS!

INFORMATION

Publisher	Rage
Developer	In-house
Genre	Shooting
Expected release date	14 March
How long in development?	1 year

MORE
THAN
MEETS
THE EYE

XBM

DEVELOPER
HISTORY

INCOMING [PC] 1999



EXPENDABLE [DC] 1999



WILD WILD RACING [PS2] 2000

ROBOT
ON A
MISSION

Ah, there's nothing like the smell of burning forests in the morning...

In *Gun Metal* you have the relentless task of saving your people from an overwhelming enemy force. Still, this doesn't mean you don't need a bit of R&R occasionally – so what better way to relax than to wipe out a forest! With your wide-ranging arsenal you can set fire to the nasty green things before blowing apart the charred remains. Hours of fun!

1



2



STAY ON TARGET: You get some cool weapons to play with in this game – some of which have some Manga-style effects.



It's refreshing to see a game that doesn't try to justify its carnage too much. In *Gun Metal* you're fighting against an overwhelming enemy force that wants nothing more than to cause your people pain. Guess what? You're the man to stop them – well, there wouldn't be much of a game if you weren't!

Actually, you're not really a man in this game. More a ten-metre tall robot with enough weaponry strapped to you to keep a small army in good business. But it doesn't end there. Oh no, that would be far too simple! You've got another advantage that can be called upon to help you kill enemy scum – a transform ability. At any point in the game, with the tap of a button, your hulking great mech will change into a speedy jet – allowing you to cover great distances with ease and engage in massive dogfights.

HARD SELL

"A BATTLE MACHINE THAT CAN TRANSFORM INTO A HIGHLY MANOEUVRABLE JET FIGHTER IS YOUR ONLY HOPE"

Rage press release

"YOUR HULKING GREAT MECH WILL CHANGE INTO A SPEEDY JET, ALLOWING YOU TO COVER GREAT DISTANCES"

IT'S LIKE...



TRANSFORMERS



ACE COMBAT

...MEETS...

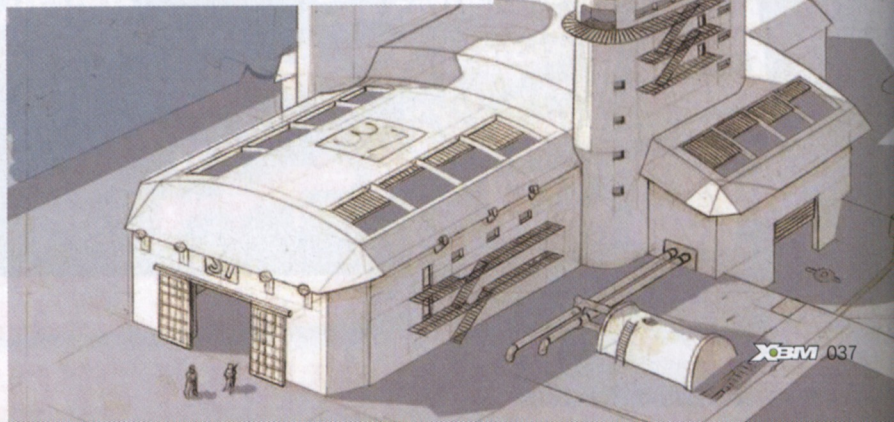
PANORAMIC: Huge sweeping landscapes waiting to be explored and trees waiting to be burnt to the ground.



ON THE DECK: It'll take some fancy flying to get through these canyons without a bump.



DOWNTOWN: At a distance this looks like a friendly city, but as soon as you get close you notice huge cannons on top of one of the buildings!



Some games may offer you a ground slog, whilst others allow you to soar through the skies, but *Gun Metal* pulls off both in one sweeping motion. This isn't just an afterthought either, as you'll need to use both modes to get through the 25 or so missions. Stay as a plane when you're taking on some anti-aircraft units and you're likely to bite the big one very fast indeed. You'll also need to figure out which of the very cool weapons on offer is best to use against each unit. Obviously, when it comes to foot soldiers pretty much anything will work, but as soon as you start to fry bigger fish a slightly more tactical approach is definitely needed.

When you do let loose with your cannons and missiles (something that happens less than a minute into play!) you begin to leave your mark on the scenery. The ground gets scorched by explosions, buildings crumble and ►

WE THINK

Mech games can be fun, but are usually too slow to be killer titles. The addition of the plane's transforming ability should make this a thing of the past.



FIREWORKS. We've heard of being in the heat of the battle, but this is just plain ridiculous!

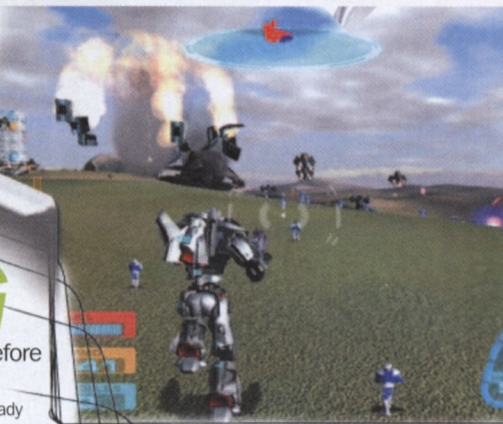
HEY GOOD LOOKING

Get on your knees and bow down before the might and power of the Xbox!

Unless you're extremely gullible, you probably already know that the things you see on the screen never start life as the finished product. Each unit, and even the ground itself, starts off as a wireframe. The environments in this game are huge and the draw distance impossibly large.

This is mostly thanks to the Xbox and its hard drive that can store the massive terrain. Just check out the number of polygons on show in this section!

LITTLE AND LARGE: One guaranteed way to give moral support to your troops is to drop down and fight with them side by side.



STORMY WEATHER: If you start getting hammered in the sky it's usually a good idea to drop down into robot form.



► trees burn down to a charred mess. The best thing about this, however, is that the status of the terrain saves to the hard drive. So, each time you re-enter an area all of these marks are still there to remind you of past conflicts!

As well as being able to destroy the scenery, one amusing aspect of the game also allows you to scare the local wildlife! Herds of various animals can be provoked until they stampede across the landscape into the battlefield. The potential for comedy executions here is endless! With careful details like this to keep the gamer interested, Gun Metal sounds like it could be onto something good. It's certainly great fun to play and the smooth, simple controls mean that anybody could pick it up in no time at all. You can't beat a bit of good old-fashioned killing. ●

"THE
GROUND
GETS
SCORCHED BY
EXPLOSIONS,
BUILDINGS
CRUMBLE AND
TREES BURN
DOWN"



NEW!

TCW

TRADING CARD WORLD

TCW
TRADING CARD WORLD

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guides

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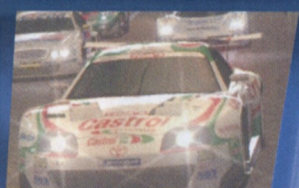
TRADING CARD WORLD IS IN THE SHOPS NOW!

WORDS: NICK ROBERTS

"WE'VE ACTUALLY HAD TO SAY TO THE ARTISTS FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, 'CAN YOU PLEASE PUT IN MORE POLYGONS'"

SARAH CHUDLEY

IT'S LIKE...



GRAN TURISMO 3
...MEETS...



MSR

HARD SELL

"WITH 100+ INDIVIDUAL AND WHEEL-TO-WHEEL CHALLENGES AND A SEPARATE ARCADE MODE, GAMERS CAN EXPECT HUNDREDS OF HOURS OF GAMEPLAY"

Microsoft press release

THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE!

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

THE MOST REALISTIC
RACING GAME EVER
DEvised!



INFORMATION

Publisher	Microsoft
Developer	Bizarre Creations
Genre	Racing
Release date	14 March
How long in development?	1 year



When you look for quality racing games, Sony has *Gran Turismo 3* whilst SEGA had its *Metropolis Street Racer*. The question is, what does the Xbox have in store for the racing fanatic? Well, how about an unofficial sequel to MSR...

The mysteriously named *Project Gotham Racing* is being developed by Bizarre Creations – who, funnily enough, also created the superb MSR. And if you thought the Dreamcast title was good, wait until you see this! The 200+ circuits are based around four cities (London, Tokyo, San Francisco and New York) and they look mind-bogglingly real. Each of the cities has been split into three areas, and every single one of these is brimming with small geographical details made up from thousands of actual photographs – the result is truly realistic!

The 20 cars on offer also look like they've come straight out of the manufacturers' showrooms. Car fans will be pitching trouser tents at the mere thought of getting behind the wheel in this game. It's understandable, because *Project Gotham Racing* is about being cool as much as it is winning. A kudos system rates your driving style – push it to the edge and you are rewarded.

Still, showing off is all very well, but if you can't do it against other humans then what's the point? Luckily, this game allows you to do just that in a split-screen four-way battle! If you have an Xbox shopping list then add *Project Gotham Racing* to the top of it – your life without this game is meaningless! ●



REPLAY HEAVEN: These cool shots might be from the Replay mode, but it looks just as good when you're behind the wheel too.



RAUNCHY REALISM: When a game starts to look this real, you have to question whether you ever need to live in the real world at all!



DETAILS: Even the brake discs on each car are fully animated. Of course, you won't really notice when you're racing around the tight corners!



Bizarre Creations

SARAH CHUDLEY
"THE NUMBER OF POLYGONS WE'RE PUSHING AROUND IS ABSOLUTELY PHENOMENAL"

DEVELOPER HISTORY



FUR FIGHTERS [DC, PS] 2000



MSR [DC] 2000

BIZARRE CREATIONS INTERVIEW

We've been following the development of *Project Gotham Racing* all year and have quizzed the team from Bizarre Creations a few times. Here's what Sarah Chudley has to say...

WHAT ADVANTAGES HAS XBOX BROUGHT TO THIS PROJECT?

The number of polygons we're pushing around is absolutely phenomenal. **We've been really impressed with the Xbox.** There's 16,000 polygons in each of the cars and I wouldn't even want to guess how many there are in the scenery, but **we're actually getting a hell of a lot of detail.** All the reflections in the cars are real-time, everything you pass by is reflected in the cars. To achieve this effect, and the reflections on the road, **we have to render the scene eight times** over, which we think is really impressive.

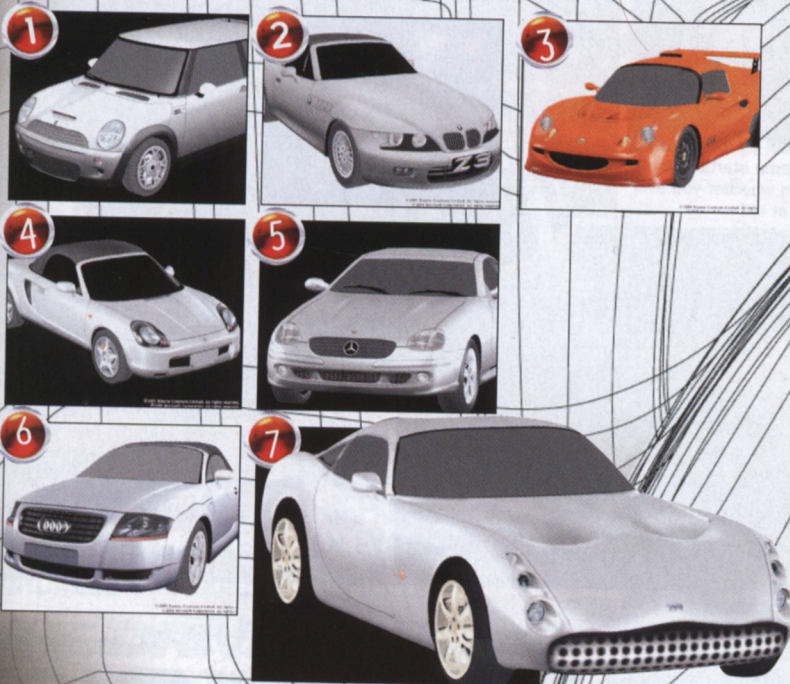
THE GRAPHICS LOOK SIMPLY STUNNING AND THE CARS SEEM TO HANDLE REALLY WELL. TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE ACHIEVED IN PROJECT GOTHAM RACING.

Each car has its own dynamics, and **we've tried to make everything as real as possible.** When you brake, the brake discs on the car will move and every car is based on a real model. We've tried to make the game feel like you're actually there, ►



COOL CARS

With 16,000 polygons in each mean machine, they had to look good really, didn't they?



DIGITAL REFLECTIONS: Not the name of a software company but a description of the amazing effects you'll find in *Project Gotham Racing*!

Lap: 1/3

► In that city. The most exciting thing for us as game developers is that the **manufacturers have actually allowed us to damage the cars**. If you hit a barrier at 180mph, you want to see crumples. Another thing we've included is the real DJs from the real cities playing **real tunes on the radio**. It's all part of trying to increase the realism. **And if you don't like the tunes they're playing, you can put your own in.**

ANYONE WHO HAS PLAYED YOUR DREAMCAST GAME METROPOLIS STREET RACER WILL KNOW ABOUT THE KUDOS SYSTEM. HAS THIS BEEN RETAINED FOR PROJECT GOTHAM RACING?

This is **the whole crux of the game**, this is what the game's all about – it's about style. Have you ever been playing a racing game, you've just had a brilliant race, everything's clean, you haven't hit the side, you haven't hit another car and you've done some brilliant manoeuvres – **you play the replay and it looks phenomenal**. What do you get? First place, and that's it! So this is what the Kudos system is all about – **you are going to be rewarded for that first place** but you're also going to be rewarded for how you achieved it. If you powerslide around the corners you can earn Kudos points, if you slalom around cones and look cool you'll get extra points, if you want to **take the car up on two wheels** – great, you'll get points for that too! The other thing about the Kudos system is the ability to set your own bar. **You can set your own goal for the race**. If you gamble to complete a track in a lower time, you'll get more Kudos points if you manage it!

YOU MUST HAVE TRAVELLED ALL AROUND THE WORLD TO RESEARCH THIS GAME – WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN THE LOCATIONS YOU HAVE?

The cities were chosen with distinct things in mind. If you go to Europe, you will go to London, **if you go to Japan, you will go to Tokyo** and San Francisco and New York are major cities in America. We've tried to take places that represent the view of a foreign country that the people of the world may have. **There's something in here that everyone can relate to**. We would have loved to put Paris into the game, but we were advised that there's a law in France that the owner of a building holds the copyright on that building, so having to get permission from each copyright owner in a two kilometre radius would have made recreating Paris a logistical nightmare.

HOW MUCH IN PROJECT GOTHAM RACING HAS COME DIRECTLY FROM M-SR ON THE DREAMCAST?

We know what worked in *M-SR*, and we know where the problems were. The best way of describing it is that we've taken the spirit of the game. **This game is a 95% code rewrite**. We've now got the permission from the manufacturers for the cars to leave the floor, so the game has completely new dynamics. We've also worked a lot into the Kudos system to make it what we wanted all along. ●

WE THINK

There's no doubt that this title will fly off the shelves when the Xbox is launched on 14 March. If you've ever been a fan of street driving games then the photo-realism of *Project Gotham* will hook you in from the start. We can't wait for our copy to arrive! A full review next issue!



CITY DWELLERS: Each city has been faithfully reproduced from photographs – what a mammoth job!

Top 20 Chart Tones

1. Because I Got High - Alromam	5603
2. Can't Get You Out Of My Head - Kylie	5536
3. Hey Baby - DJ Otzi	5767
4. Closer To Me - Five	6125
5. What Would You Do? - City High	5548
6. One Night Stand - Misteek	6103
7. I'm A Slave 4 You - Britney Spears	5782
8. You Rock My World - Michael Jackson	5783
9. Don't Need The Sun To Shine - Gabrielle	6205
10. Smooth Criminal - Alien Art Farm	5742
11. You Got It Bad - Usher	5751
12. Family Affair - Mary J. Blige	5541
13. In The End - Linkin Park	5610
14. Chain Reaction - Steps	5798
15. Flawless - The Ones	5619
16. Follow Me - Uncle Cracker	5417
17. Chop Suey - System Of A Down	6164
18. Rock The House - Gorillaz	5811
19. I'm So Crazy - Par-O-One	6206
20. We Fit Together - O Town	6207

These Weeks New Releases

5097. GUNNIE SOME MORE - BUSTA RHYMES	
5785. RUMBLE WITH ME - LIL BOW WOW	
5609. DON'T MESS WITH THE RADIO - NIVEA	
5632. THE METRE - POWDERFINGER	
5684. XZIBIT - PAPAARAZI	
5576. LUVVUEN - R CLAN	
5965. FIRST DATE - BLINK	
5572. OUT OF CONTROL - DARUDE	
5632. NITE & FOG - MERCURY REV	
5537. ALCOHOLIC - STARSAILOR	
5538. ANDROGYNY	
5539. ANG CODES - LUDACRIS	
5540. BATTER UP - NELLY ST LUNATICS	
5542. FINALLY - KINGS OF TOMORROW	
5544. JUS 1 KISS - BASEMENT JAXX	
5546. MUHAMMAD ALI - FAITHLESS	
5548. WHO - EDCASE AND SWEETIE JUNE	
5551. SWEET REVENGE - THE SPOOKS	
5552. YA MAMA - FATBOY SLIM	

CHART PRE-RELEASES

5782. I'M A SLAVE FOR YOU - BRITNEY SPEARS	
5795. NIGHT ON NIGHT ON - SILICONE SOUL	
5796. NEW BORN - ELBOW	
5761. FEAR - IAN BROWN	
5748. ASH - CANDY	
5745. BLUES - MUSE	
5764. FEELING ON YOUR BODY - R KELLY	
5770. SMOOCH JACKER - THE EELS	
5740. SMOOTH CRIMINAL - ALIEN ART FARM	
5747. BROWN SKIN - INDIA ARIE	

BIG KIDS TV CORNER

0012. PEANUTS - SNOOPY	
0099. MINISTERS	
4661. RAINBOW	
5359. BATFINK	
5362. HONG KONG FUZY	
5365. MR BENN - THEME	
5363. JAMIE & THE MAGIC TORCH	
5365. NEW ADV OF SUPERMAN	

ALL TIME FAVOURITE TONES

5273. CASTLES IN THE SKY - IAN VAN DAHL	
5270. ETERNITY - ROBBIE WILLIAMS	
5271. HEAVEN & A HALFPPE - OPM	
5245. I'M ALL ABOUT YOU - DJ LUCK	
5444. HELP ME I'M A FISH - LITTLE TREES	
5232. ETERNAL FLAME - ATOMIC KITTEN	
5350. LITTLE L - JAMIE HODGKINSON	
5271. PURPLE HILLS - D12	
0060. GET UP AND STAND UP - BOB MARLEY	

ANTHEMS

9062. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN	
5077. BRUSH NATIONAL ANTHEM	
5084. WELSH NATIONAL ANTHEM	

70's/80's HITS

0333. JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH - DEPECHE MODE	
0241. SURFIN USA - BEACH BOYS	
0001. TAKE ON ME - A-HA	
0243. TEARS IN HEAVEN - ERIC CLAPTON	

POP

0340. LA VIDA LOCA - RICKY MARTIN	
1518. I BELIEVE I CAN FLY - R KELLY	
1583. BAT OUT OF HELL - MEATLOAF	

CLASSICS

0068. LIGHT MY FIRE - THE DOORS	
0291. I WILL SURVIVE - GLORIA GAYNOR	
0245. THESE WERE THE DAYS - QUEEN	
0109. ONE LOVE - BOB MARLEY	

BRAND NEW CLASSICS

6161. SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY - U2	
5340. WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN - P. SLEDGE	
5335. RENDEVOUS 2 - JEAN MICHELLE JARRE	
5336. UNDER THE BRIDGE - RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS	
5292. DON'T YOU WANT ME - HUMAN LEAGUE	
5293. DO YOU THINK I'M SEXY - ROD STEWART	
5320. PHANTOM OF THE OPERA - IRON MAIDEN	
5377. IT'S NOT UNUSUAL - TOM JONES	
5294. SAILING - ROD STEWART	
5295. PRETTY WOMAN - ROD ORBISON	
5299. IMAGINE - JOHN LENNON	
5302. I WANT TO BREAK FREE - QUEEN	

60's HITS

5295. PRETTY WOMAN - ROD STEWART	
5292. I CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE - ELVIS PRESLEY	
5352. HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN - ANIMALS	
5377. IT'S NOT UNUSUAL - TOM JONES	
4775. I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKIN - FRANK SINATRA	
5263. JAILHOUSE ROCK - ELVIS PRESLEY	
5354. JUMPING JACK FLASH - ROLLING STONES	
5264. LOVE ME TENDER - ELVIS PRESLEY	
5408. MUSIC TO WATCH THE GIRLS GO BY - ANDY WILLIAMS	

CAN'T FIND WHAT YOU WANT?
name your favourite artist(s) and we'll tell you all the tones we've got by them
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TONES OF THE WEEK

6067. Laurel & Hardy	
3548. The Great Escape	
1836. The Rock (Wrestling)	
0099. The Muppets	
4850. BBC Cricket Theme	
6060. Bare Necessities (Jungle Book)	
0013. Beverly Hills Cop	
5317. Joe 90	
5061. Dambusters March	
4860. Pulp Fiction - Theme	
0005. Walk This Way - Aerosmith	
0132. Simpsons Theme	
1576. Who Let The Dogs Out	
0025. James Bond Theme	
0221. Match of the Day	
0065. Halloween Film	
0094. Mission Impos. Theme	

CHART PRE-RELEASES

5438. BEAUTY DIES YOUNG - LONGWOLD	
5449. BODY ROCK - THYMES 4	
5445. DO YOU LOVE ME - MADAMOISELLE	
5430. I DON'T KNOW WHY - THE HONEYZ	
5433. I WAS MADE FOR LOVING YOU - ANASTACIA	
5448. NOTHING WITHOUT ME - MANCHILD	
5443. SERIOUS - MAXWELL D	
5498. ON YEAR - FOXY BROWN	
5499. PLAYS GON PLAY - J.W	
6142. MY FRIEND - GROOVE ARMADA	
6143. STAND CLEAR - M.O.P. FEAT ADAM P.	
6176. THAT DAY - NATALIE IMBRUGLIA	

BIG KIDS TV CORNER

5367. WIZARD OF OZ	
5337. DON A DEEZ	
5316. BANANA SPLITS	
4690. MAGIC ROUNDABOUT	
4688. DR WHO	
5317. JOE 90	
5375. FRAGGLE ROCK	
0155. THUNDERBIRDS	
0099. THE MUPPETS - THEME	
5339. CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG	
5339. WOODY WOODPECKER	

ALL TIME FAVOURITE TONES

5272. PERFECT GENTLEMAN - WYCLEF JEAN	
0134. SMOKE ON THE WATER - DEEP PURPLE	
3732. GIRLS DEM SUGAR - BEANIE MAN	
3722. "I" ON YOU - D12	
3721. CLINT EASTWOOD - GORILLAZ	
0294. CHANGES - 2PAC	
3752. BOW WOW - LIL BOW WOW	
3723. PIANO LOCO - DJ LUCK	
4756. WE COME ONE - FAITHLESS	
5486. STARLIGHT - SUPERMAN LOVERS	
5229. LUV ME LUV ME - SHAGGY	

ANTHEMS

0126. RULE BRITANNIA - BRITISH	
0129. SCOTLAND THE BRAVE	
5306. FLOWER OF SCOTLAND	
0024. STAR SPANGLED BANNER (USA)	

70's/80's HITS

0087. THE LION SLEEPS TONIGHT - TIGHT FIT	
5356. SUMMER OF 69 - BRYAN ADAMS	
0185. WALK OF LIFE - DIRE STRAITS	
1507. DANCING QUEEN - ABBA	
0095. MONEY MONEY MONEY - ABBA	
5469. KINGSTON TOWN - UB40	
0167. YMCA - VILLAGE PEOPLE	

POP

0258. AMERICAN WOMAN - LENNY KRAVITZ	
0272. AROUND THE WORLD - RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS	

CLASSICS

0068. LIGHT MY FIRE - THE DOORS	
0291. I WILL SURVIVE - GLORIA GAYNOR	
0245. THESE WERE THE DAYS - QUEEN	
0109. ONE LOVE - BOB MARLEY	

BRAND NEW CLASSICS

5300. NIGHTS IN WHITE SATIN - MOODY BLUES	
5304. MAGGIE MAY - ROD STEWART	
5321. GARDEN PARTY - MARILLION	
5305. SATISFACTION - ROLLING STONES	
5308. THE AIR I BREATHE - THE HOLLIES	
5309. SIMPLY THE BEST - TINA TURNER	
5318. HOTEL CALIFORNIA - EAGLES	
5338. WITH OR WITHOUT YOU - U2	

60's HITS

5295. PRETTY WOMAN - ROD STEWART	
5292. I CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE - ELVIS PRESLEY	
5352. HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN - ANIMALS	
5377. IT'S NOT UNUSUAL - TOM JONES	
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5264. LOVE ME TENDER - ELVIS PRESLEY	
5408. MUSIC TO WATCH THE GIRLS GO BY - ANDY WILLIAMS	

ROCK YOUR NOKIA

★ TONE OF THE MONTH ★
THE MAGIC ROUNDABOUT
CODE 4690

& MOTOROLA, SAGEM & ERICSSON
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★ WITH TONES & GRAPHICS ★
★ TEXT MESSAGES FROM 50P ★

NEW THIS WEEK!

THE HULK - TV THEME	6077	ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES	6152
WILLOW THE WISP - TV THEME	6079	RAGGY DOLLS	6153
BUGSY MALONE GOOD GUYS	6068	THE SMURFS	6154
HI HO HI HO - SNOW WHITE	6072	WINNIE THE POOH	6179
HE-MAN - TV THEME	6149	ENTER THE DRAGON	6172
BACK TO THE FUTURE	6146	TARZAN	6176
BLUE PETER	6147	GODZILLA	6156
DOGTANIAN	6148	KICK START	6159
HE-MAN	6149	HAPPY BIRTHDAY - TRADITIONAL SONG	6075
HOME AND AWAY	6150	THE WEDDING MARCH	6078
JIM'LIX FIX IT	6151		

NEW FILM & TV TONES

LAUREL & HARDY TV THEME	6067	UP WHERE WE BELONG - OFFICER & GENTLEMAN	5412
ZIP A DEE DOO DAD - DISNEY THEME	6098	SPEAK SOFTLY - THE GODFATHER	5413
BUTTON MOON - TV THEME	6090	WHERE EAGLES DARE - FILM THEME	5422
GRANGE HILL - TV THEME	6093	WHOLE NEW WORLD - ALADDIN	5424
TOM & JERRY - TV THEME	6095	IF I WERE A RICH MAN - FIDDLER/RF 5397	
BRAVEHEART - FILM THEME	6076	SINGIN' IN THE RAIN - MUSICAL	5411
LORD OF THE RINGS (PART 1)	6080	JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR	5418
THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY	4854	OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING	5419
BABY ELEPHANT WALK - HARATI	5401	THE TIME WARP - ROCKY HORROR	5421
CHIM CHIM CHERE - MARY POPPINS	5403		

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LIVERPOOL STAY TOP!!! JUST!!!

1. NEVER WALK ALONE - LIVERPOOL	3545
2. SIMPLY THE BEST - RANGERS	5309
3. FIELDS OF ATHENRAY - CELTIC	3547
3. MARCHING ON TOGETHER - LEEDS UTD	3541
4. Z CAR - EVERTON/WATFORD	3546
5. SAILING - MILLWALL	5294
5. CITY TILL I DIE - CITY	3540
6. WILD ROVER - BLACKBURN	5310
7. BLUE IS THE COLOUR - CHELSEA	4140
8. GLORY, GLORY - MAN UTD, SPURS	4134
9. WHO LET THE DOGS OUT - LIVERPOOL	1576
10. MULL OF KINTYRE - CHARLTON	0224
11. GLORY, GLORY - MAN UTD, SPURS	4134
12. BLUE MOON - MAN CITY	4130
13. VINDALOO - ENGLAND	1514
14. I'M FOREVER BLOWING... - WEST HAM	3543
15. THE GREAT ESCAPE - SHEF WEDNESDAY	3548
16. GLORY, GLORY - MAN UTD, SPURS	4134
17. DAYDREAM BELIEVER - SUNDERLAND	4132
18. KEEP RIGHT ON - BIRMINGHAM CITY	4137
19. LAND OF HOPE/GLORY - ENGLAND	5251
21. WHEN THE SAINTS - SOUTHAMPTON	3544
22. MATCH OF THE DAY - THEME	0221
23. NAY NAY NEVER - BURNLEY	4138
24. RULE BRITANNIA - BRITISH TEAMS	0126

Football Tones/Logos

BECKS 4254	IPSWICH 4243	Charlton 1652
LIVERPOOL 4246	MIDDLESBORO 1658	SOUTHAMPTON 1659
Newcastle 4247	Millwall F.C. 1546	FREEMANTLE 4270
UNITED 3501	QUEEN'S PARK 3946	WATFORD 3959
CARDIFF CITY 3934	GUINNESS 3514	Wolves 1489
GILLINGHAM 3939	GOLTON UNDERERS 3932	BURNLEY 3933
WEST HAM 1472	FOREST 3937	COVENTRY 1653
SHEFFIELD UNITED 3947	OWEN 4262	RANGERS 4272
KEARN 1571	CHELSEA 4240	ROVERS 1469

Films & TV Tones (★★★ MOST POPULAR)

0025. JAMES BOND	0166. BENNY HILL ★★★	5061. DAMBUSTERS MARCH
0187. JAMES BOND DOCTOR NO	0199. INDIANA JONES	0153. THE SWEENEY
0043. EASTENDERS	4857. LIVE AND LET DIE	4826. THE MAGNIFICENT 7
0065. HALLOWEEN	4858. LOST IN SPACE	4827. STAR WARS (PHANTOM MENACE)
0094. MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	4860. THE PROFESSIONALS	4828. RETURN OF THE JEDI
0101. HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YOU	4860. PULP FICTION ★★★	4829. THE SAINT ★★★
0132. THE SIMPSONS	4862. THE ROCKFORD FILES	5420. PICK A POCKET OR TWO - OLIVER
0151. STAR WARS	4863. STARSKY & HUTCH	4846. BUFFY VAMP SLAYER
0152. SUPERMAN	4864. TUN GUN	4844. STAR TREK
1516. CHARLIE'S ANGELS	4865. WALLACE & GROMIT	4847. THE TEAM
0157. TITANIC	4860. AIRWOLF - TV THEME	4848. BLIND DATE
0013. BEVERLY HILLS COP	4862. BIPERTY	4849. CORONATION STREET
4780. BEWITCHED	4863. BLACKADDER	4850. BBC CRICKET
5298. ROBIN HOOD	4864. BLADE RUNNER	4851. DAD'S ARMY
0035. DALLAS	5265. FRIENDS	4852. EYE OF THE TIGER
0044. THE ENTERTAINER (THE STING)	5266. JAWS ★★★	4853. FATHER TED
0047. EUROVISION	4865. BUG'S LIFE	4855. HAWAII 5 O ★★★
	4867. CHARIOTS OF FIRE	4856. THE ITALIAN JOB
	4890. MAGIC ROUNDABOUT	5250. DAWSON'S CREEK
	4830. LOVE IS ALL AROUND - 4 WEDDINGS	

Wrestling Tones & Logos

Wrestling Tones & Logos

3486	APA	NEW!	4836	I'VE GOT IT ALL - BILLY GUNN	THE ROCK	1835	APA PROTECTION	3042
3487	CHYNA		4837	MEDAL - KURT ANGLE	DEADMAN	THE UNDER TAKER	Y2J	3052
3485	KANE		4838	OUT OF THE FIRE - KANE	HINDY-X	BOYS	KA	KURT ANGLE
3480	KURT ANGLE		4839	PIE - THE ROCK & SLICK RICK	CHYNA	3044	RAW	3058
1839	RAW		4840	SHOOTER - CHRIS BENOIT				
1836	THE ROCK ★★★		4841	THE GAME - TRIPLE H				
1840	TOO COOL		4842	WHO I AM - CHYNA				
3482	TRIPLE H							
3484	UNDERTAKER (NEW)							
4835	IT JUST FEELS RIGHT - LITA							

More Films/Tv

CHYNA

3044

hH

TRIPLE H

3051

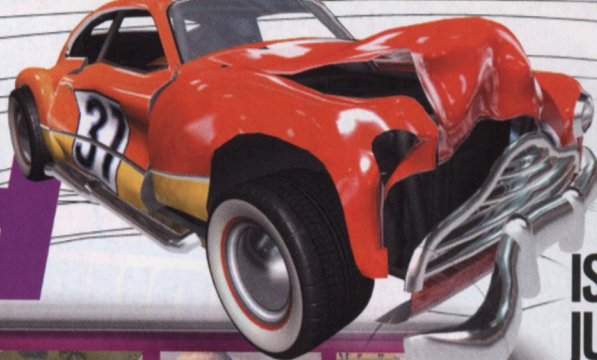
RAW

3058

CRASH

VEHICULAR CARNAGE ON A GRAND SCALE. SUNDAY DRIVERS NEED NOT APPLY!

WORDS: SIMON CANN



HARD SELL

"FIRST AND FOREMOST, CRASH IS DEFINITELY NOT JUST ANOTHER RACING GAME"

The Crash development team

DEVELOPER HISTORY



WILD WILD RACING [PS2]
2000



GUN METAL [XBOX]
2002



DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER [XBOX]
2002

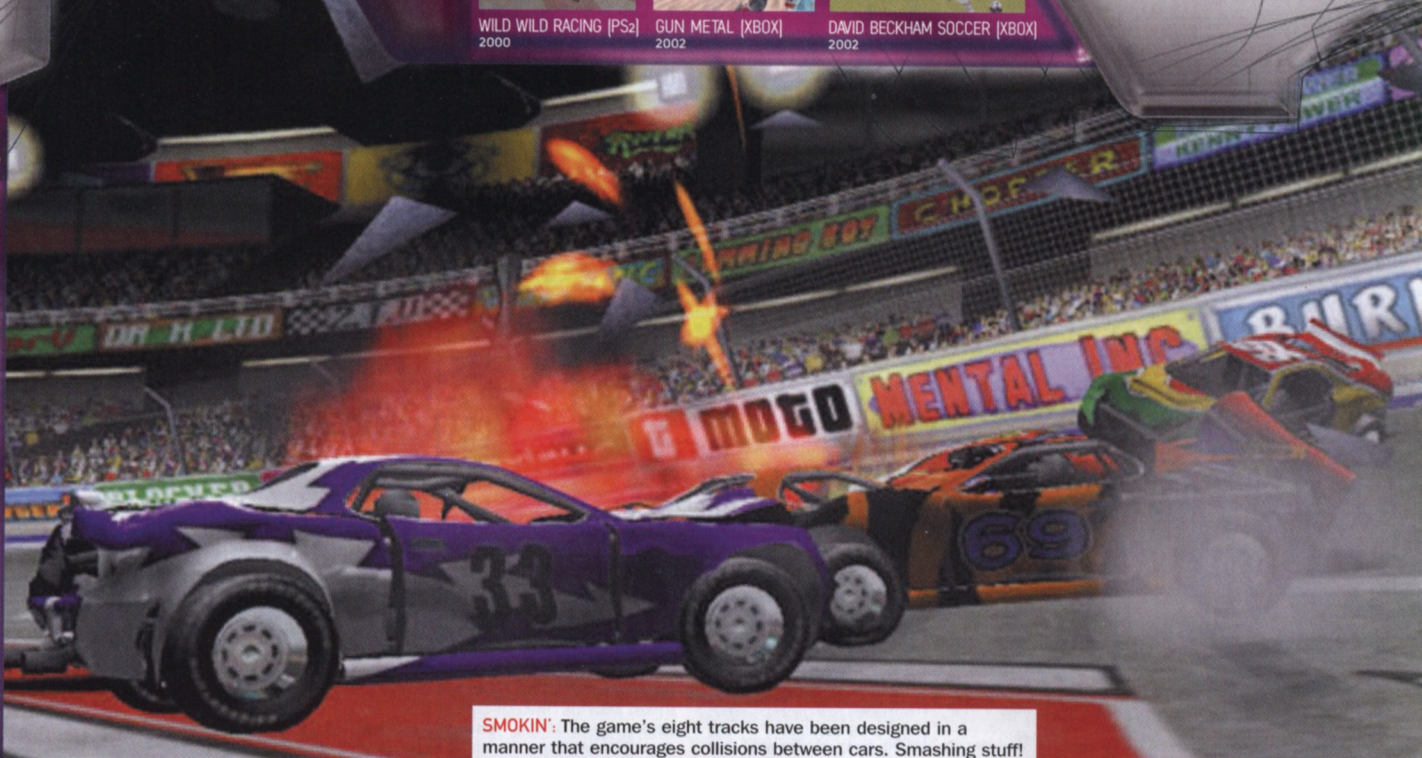
IT'S LIKE...



PROJECT GOTHAM
...MEETS...



GRAND THEFT
AUTO 3

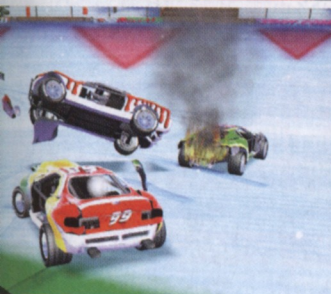
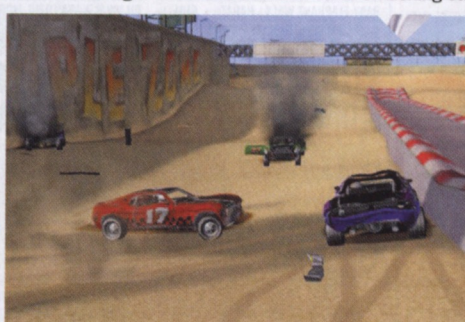


SMOKIN': The game's eight tracks have been designed in a manner that encourages collisions between cars. Smashing stuff!

INFORM

Polisher Rage
Developer Rage Sheffield
Genre Racing
Release date 14 March
How long in development? 1 year,
6 months

THE DRIVE
OF YOUR
LIFE!
XBOX



HE'S ON FIRE: During the action visual effects such as smoke and fire will make an appearance. The result looks impressive.



In recent years driving games have aspired to be ever more realistic (often to the detriment of a title's gameplay). Now, whilst this is all well and good, it's not always that much fun to spend hours tinkering with your overhead camshaft and such like – sometimes you just want to get behind the wheel and cause as much carnage as possible. Obviously, developer Rage has tapped into this stored up aggression and is set to release *Crash*, a game that will offer the road rage sufferers amongst you a virtual outlet to unleash all that pent up anger you've developed whilst stuck in endless traffic-jams.

If you ever played the original *Destruction Derby* on the PlayStation then you'll have a rough idea what to expect here. Indeed the development team at Rage's Sheffield studio has cited the aforementioned 32-bit title as an influence on *Crash*. However, as you might expect, the power afforded by Microsoft's Xbox technology has allowed the team to drag the concept of destruction racing kicking and screaming into the new millennium.

A selection of one-player and multiplayer options will be on offer. In the former you can embark on a Career mode, starting with a choice of just three cars and three regions to drive in. By completing certain challenges and objectives you'll gradually unlock a host of new vehicles and areas. An Arcade mode will also be included that

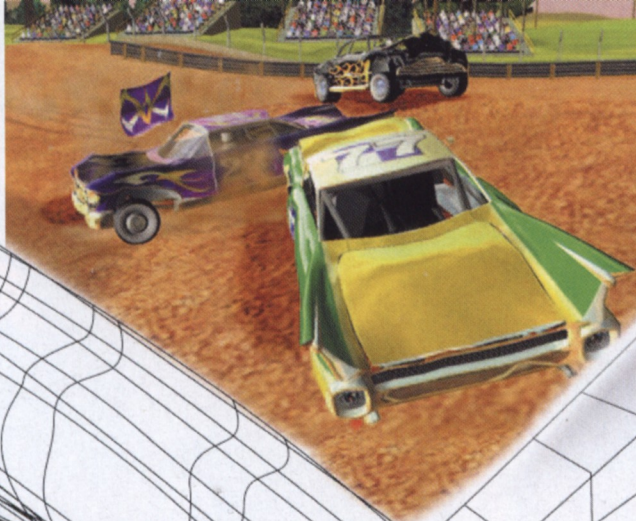
SMASHING FUN: A good side-on collision will always concentrate a rival driver's mind.

CRASH

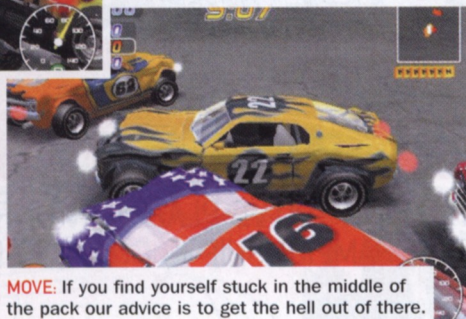
MOTOR MADNESS

Forget about that no-claims bonus!

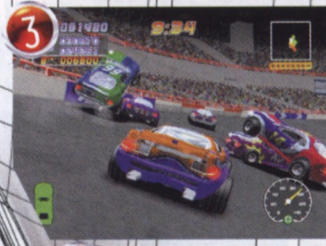
With sixteen cars on the screen you can imagine that no matter how careful a driver you are, you're going to get the odd prang or two on your motor. Not to worry though, because the multi-vehicle pile-ups look so damn impressive you won't mind that your tyres have just blown and the wings of your car seem to have gone AWOL. Make no mistake, in *Crash* the objective is to have as much four-wheeled destructive fun as possible – you can worry about any damage inflicted later.



BO AND LUKE: Don't expect to stay on the ground throughout the action – careless driving will often see you flipped into the air like a pancake.



MOVE: If you find yourself stuck in the middle of the pack our advice is to get the hell out of there.



WE THINK

One of the potential stars of the Xbox launch line-up. With its solid graphics and destructive gameplay, *Crash* should be a winner.



SMASH 'N' GRAB The cars featured in the game will not be based on real-life models. However, we can't say we really care that much if it means we get to wreck them!

allows you to take any motors you've unlocked and drive them into the ground. Additionally, you'll find a host of multiplayer options, allowing up to four players to go head-to-head in gruelling death-matches. With up to sixteen cars on-screen at any one time, you can imagine that races and challenges are rarely non-eventful.

As a game, *Crash* obviously strives to be an out-and-out arcade racer, where the emphasis is placed firmly on creating chaos. The game already seems to meet this objective with a good degree of success and hopefully the finished product should deliver an unusual take on the driving genre. As is often the case with driving titles the cars (including Hot Rods, Muscle Cars and Performance Cars) appear to be the stars. Each vehicle will be constructed of approximately 10,000 polygons and as you collide with parts of the scenery and other drivers, you'll be able to marvel at the visible real-time damage on display.

The motors each have 30 different parts that can be damaged. Consequently, bonnets will fly off, doors will flap open and windscreens will shatter into tiny little pieces. Having seen the preview code of the game up and running we can state categorically that this is an extremely impressive looking game. Suffice to say, if the gameplay is up to the same high standards then *Crash* will be one of the most desirable Xbox launch titles when it appears in March. We'll keep you posted on this one. ●

DEVELOPER
HISTORY



UNREAL (PC)
1997



UNREAL
TOURNAMENT (PC)
1999



ADVENTURE PINBALL:
FORGOTTEN ISLAND (PC)
2001

HARD SELL

"A SUPERB
SINGLEPLAYER
EXPERIENCE COMBINED
WITH AN UNPARALLELED
MULTIPLAYER COMPONENT"

Infogrames press release

SHOOT
TO KILL
XBOX

THE NAME SAYS IT ALL, THIS

UNREAL CHA

YOU MIGHT THINK YOU'VE PLAYED AN UNREAL GAME BEFORE, BUT
THIS LATEST CHAMPIONSHIP IS GOING TO BLOW YOU AWAY!

WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

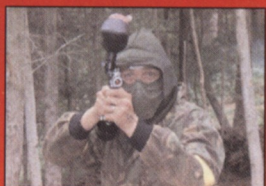
INFORMATION

Publisher	Infogrames
Developer	Digital Extremes
Genre	First-person Shooter
Release date	Summer
How long in development?	1 year

IT'S LIKE...



THE RUNNING MAN



...MEETS... PLAYING PAINTBALL

LET'S BE FRIENDS:

Although killing your mates can be great fun, it's even more enjoyable to play one of the team-based battle games!



h, the sweet smell of combat! How anybody can justify their existence for a day without having racked up a few frags covering the walls with gibby goodness is a complete and utter mystery. When *Unreal Championship* is released you will understand the very definition of addiction.

A brand-new title created exclusively for the Xbox, this game is easily one of the most anticipated pieces of software for the console, and it's not hard to see why. Using an entirely new game engine, *Unreal Championship* has visual appeal to quite literally die for. When you first see this game running, you're going to have to explain to people why you've got a permanent smile plastered all over your mug!

There are 30 levels in the game, split between outdoor or indoor locations, and every single one of them has been lovingly laboured over to the point of no return. New terrain technology has been abused, volumetric light implemented (whatever that means!) and a whole host of other cool particle effects. In fact, the game code used to handle particle effects has been completely rewritten by the god-like developer Digital Extremes.

'NOW IS THE
RIGHT TIME
TO THROW
AWAY ALL
EXPECTATIONS
BECAUSE
NONE OF
THEM COME
CLOSE"



MOTHER EARTH: The previous Unreal games rarely strayed outside, but now there are massive outdoor sections.



RUN FORREST
RUN: When the world starts to explode around you like this you're about to frag or be fragged.



DRAW!

You can't just create a stunning looking character model overnight, you know!

If there's one thing first-person shooters need it's vibrant characters. How are you supposed to feel good about killing the average Jo Bloggs on the street? What you need are mercenary soldiers with oversized beer guts, and rendered women with perfect proportions that couldn't possibly exist in the real world. When was the last time you saw something like this walking down the high street – a sister for Freddy if we ever saw one!



GAME IS UNREAL...

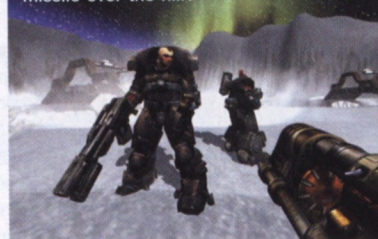
CHAMPIONSHIP

This is to ensure you get to experience something the likes of which you couldn't even possibly imagine. Okay, so the eternal sceptics amongst you may be turning up your nose at this point, but now is the right time to throw away all expectations because none of them come close! For example, on some levels you'll come across clouds of realistic fog. No big deal, you say? Well, imagine that fog parting and swirling as bullets tear into it or human bodies run through. This is the kind of joyous detail to be found in *Unreal Championship* – the kind of stuff that makes performing over-the-top executions all the more fun.

Of course, the big thing about *Unreal Championship* (or any other first-person shooter when it comes down to it!) is the multiplayer mode. There is an extensive one-player game for you to mess around in but you should consider this as training for the main opposition – other humans. This new game features four-player split-screen and link-up play, but the real fun comes when you go online. Supporting 32 players, you are guaranteed a furious frenzy of all-out killing and tactical team play – the only problem is how to explain the phone bill! It's really hard not to get excited by this game – the Unreal name has long stood for quality first-person fun, and this latest title looks set to uphold the tradition. ●



STAR BRIGHT: A rare astrological event, or did somebody just let off a redeemer missile over the hill?



WE THINK

There's probably more anticipation around this baby than virginity loss and rightly so, because *Unreal Championship* is going to rock.



ANOTHER TOMB RAIDER: A stunning piece of architecture like this and all they can think about is fighting – what is this world coming to?

work in progress
GRAND THEFT
AUTO III

DEVELOPER HISTORY



BODY HARVEST [N64] 1998



GRAND THEFT AUTO
[PS] 1998

HARD SELL

"THE NEW PERSPECTIVE AND STUNNING GRAPHICS WILL NOW ALLOW AN EVEN WIDER AUDIENCE TO EXPLORE THEIR INNER CRIMINAL"

Take 2 press release

WORDS: WILL JOHNSTON

THEY TRIED TO BAN IT...

GRAND THEFT AUTO III

FAST CARS, BIG GUNS,
HOOKERS, VIOLENT
DEATHS AND AN 18
CERTIFICATE... COOL!

INFORMATION

Publisher	Take 2 Interactive
Developer	DMA Design
Genre	Action
Release date	April
How long in development?	2 years

IT'S LIKE...



MAX PAYNE

...MEETS...



DRIVER 2

"ILLEGAL ISN'T STRONG
ENOUGH A WORD TO
DESCRIBE THE SORT OF
JAPES YOU'LL GET UP TO"

GET AROUND: There are three sections of the city, each with their own architecture, gangs and civilians.



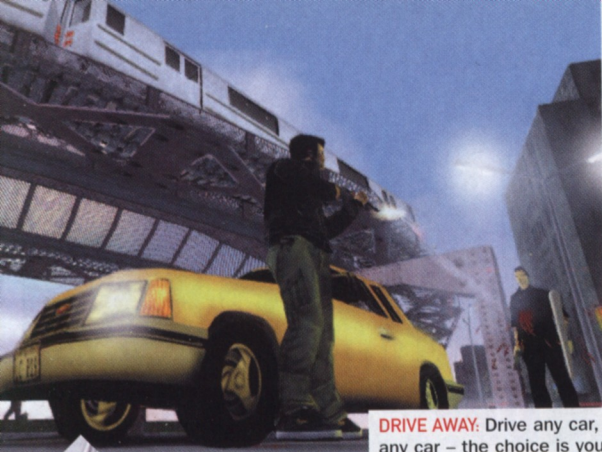
N

o point in keeping you guessing about this one, since we've already played the PlayStation2 version and so can state that you are in for something very special indeed. To try and break down GTAIII into its components in order to describe what you're in for isn't going to work, since this is not going to be the sum of its parts. It's going to be so much better.

You play a criminal trying to make your way in Liberty City by doing some very bad things indeed. Illegal isn't strong enough a word to describe the sort of japes you'll be up to and the game's title in no way conveys your stock and trade. For the first time since How To Be A Complete Bastard was released for the ZX Spectrum you get to be... oh yes.

Liberty City is exactly what it says on the map, since in this metropolis you will have complete freedom to do what you want, to whom you want and however you want. And what better place is there to nick cars, kill innocents with repeated swings of baseball bats and blow off the legs of pimps than one that mimics real life so beautifully. In this city everything works, from the weather system to the traffic, pedestrian behaviour to the finely tuned physics installed in every object.

This one is really going to blow you away as soon as you see exactly what you can do and how the digital world reacts to your actions. Kill someone and a witness will call

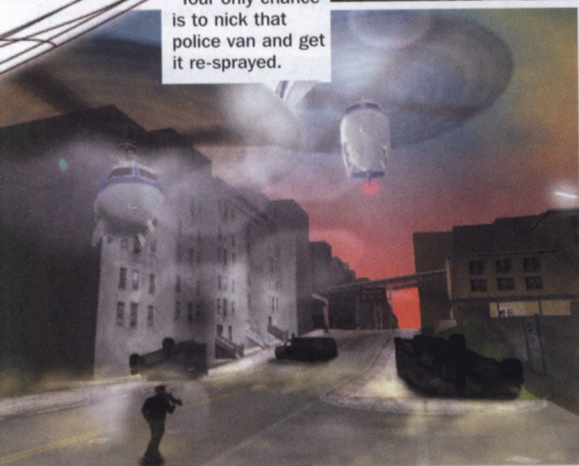


DRIVE AWAY: Drive any car, destroy any car – the choice is yours.

TAKE THE TRAIN: You can even get around the city using the elevated train system.



DIRTY VILLAINS: Your only chance is to nick that police van and get it re-sprayed.

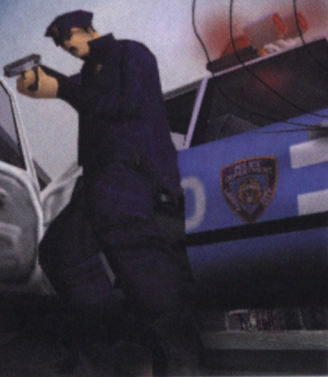
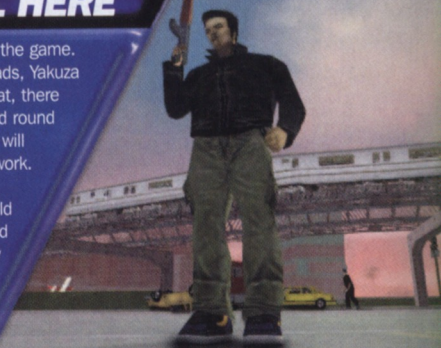


THE GANG'S ALL HERE

There are four gangs in the game. You've got the Mafia, Triads, Yakuza and Yardies. Not only that, there are phone boxes littered round the city where people will phone you offering work.

There are even rumours that should you drive a taxi and pick up a ride they ask you to perform a favour for them. To quote *Taxi Driver*, "This you should see".

ROCKET MAN: The enemies may be mean, but you've got yourself a rocket launcher.



YMCA: The game features Village People look-a-likes who sing "in the navy" – probably.



KILLED UNTIL DEAD

Riddle me this...



1

Thanks to *GTAIII*'s lock-on system, when you drop a target you can carry on shooting them while they convulse on the floor. You can even run around their corpse while your arm remains aimed at their body and the bullets do the riddling. There are no points for such ruthless acts of barbarism and no need for it at all – it just looks damned cool.



2

And when you've emptied your clip you can then lay into them with a baseball bat. Mmm, baby seals...

WE THINK

Absolutely stunning on the PS2, a sure fire hit on the Xbox.

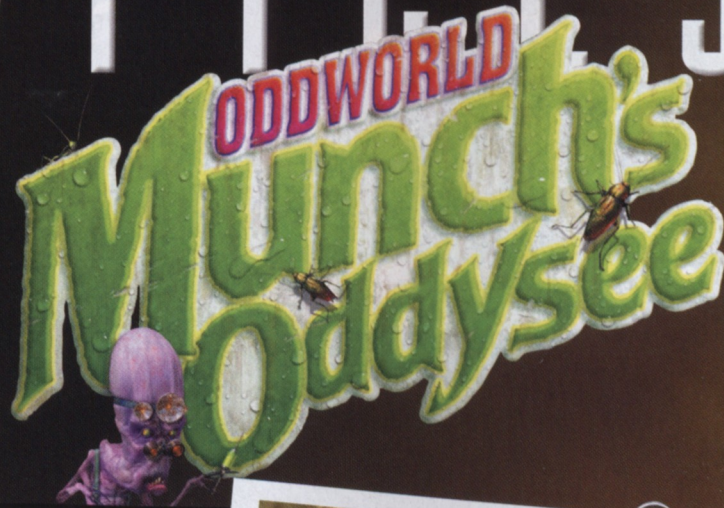
the cops. Kill the cop and you'll get more cops, then SWAT teams, then the FBI, then the army. Of course, you could have just saved yourself the hassle by icing the witness as soon as possible, since you had the choice and that is what *GTAIII* is going to be all about.

The game does have a mission structure and you'll be working for various crime bosses over 70 missions, where you act out many dream roles; from assassin to getaway driver, delivery boy to hit squad leader. And just like performing in an action movie they are to, but since Liberty City feels so real you're just as likely to be spending your time driving around looking for ramps to jump, citizens to mess with and yes, even prostitutes to pick up. Already infamous on the PS2, this will be THE game to show off the Xbox's superior technology – and considering the quality of the existing Sony version, that's really saying something. ●



THE X FILES

A HUGE LAUNCH TITLE, ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF FIVE ODDWORLD GAMES DEVELOPED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE XBOX. WE GO UNDERCOVER TO DELIVER YOU SOME TOP SECRET X-FILES TAKEN FROM DEEP INSIDE THE FOUL-SMELLING DEPTHS OF THE VYKKERS LABORATORIES...



Case File: Escaped Test Subjects
File Number: XBMF2
Investigating Glukkons: Mike Richardson
Date: 15.11.01

The unthinkable has happened. All of the tedious precautionary measures put in place have failed hideously. Yes that's right, the trouble-causing Mudokon Abe has returned and worse still, he's set free the last remaining member of the Gabbit species – the one known as Munch.

The controversy this could cause to the Magog Cartel and us here at the Vykkers Labs is immense. It's embarrassing enough that we were the ones directly responsible for the culling of the entire Gabbit race, but if people were to know that we've been operating on Munch, the last of his species... well, needless to say this is serious and we cannot have a repeat of the previous antics where Abe managed to successfully disrupt the operations of numerous slave labour factories.

On their own they could be dealt with but together they are to be considered highly dangerous. Both Munch and Abe are currently to be found roaming free around the Vykkers factories, despite all attempts by Slig guards to bring them to justice. If we are to continue our operations then it is of the utmost importance that the pair are caught immediately and bought into the labs for suitable punishment. Irwin is particularly interested to see just how much Butt-flo one creature can take. Attached are some files to assist with their capture.



EXHIBIT A-2: Unfortunately, as this CCTV still shows, the Slig guards were unsuccessful in stopping the renegade creatures.



EXHIBIT A-1: After the initial break for freedom the two specimens were seen creeping across the factory gantries.



EXHIBIT B
Suspensions were raised prior to the escape after these postcards expressing a hatred for the workplace were intercepted.



Vykkers Labs Test Subject Profile

Name: Abe
Species: Mudokon (Worker Class)
Average life: 40 years

As a slave labourer, in the good old days Abe was the very model of a perfect employee. He even managed to snag the esteemed Rupture Farms 'Employee Of The Year' award for his long-running dedication to the company and high quality of work. Who would have thought there was such a deep hatred inside.

A genuine threat to the Vykkers Corporation, Abe is now regarded as a priority-one 'shoot to kill' subject. Since his heroic play in the uprising against the Magog Cartel (see attached record of offences) he has become a strong militant leader with some worryingly good connections in Oddworld - a seriously impressive feat for a creature that has no sexual organs.

Despite the fact that his mouth was sewn shut as a worker, his ability to use GameSpeak cannot be underestimated. This, combined with his mystical powers gained from the tattoos (see Exhibit C) burned onto his blue skin, gives him an unrivalled level of influence. He is able to possess every creature from Sligs to Scrabs who are powerless under his command. More worrying than this, however, is his ability to control the man-eating Fuzzles, which he sets free at any given opportunity.

It is also rumoured that the annoying Abe has the ability to heal others and, worse yet, turn invisible. He has never been seen invisible but as soon as he is, a report of this will be posted on the noticeboards, complete with pictures. This Mudokon is a high risk to the Vykkers work and should be stopped immediately - if we catch him he will regret the very day he was born in our labs.

-Abe appears to have taken it upon himself to be Munch's guardian angel and is rumoured to be helping him restart a Gabbit society somewhere in Oddworld.

-As a precautionary measure we've taken Abe's mother out of circulation. She is being kept under lock and key in a hope to bait him into our clutches.



EXHIBIT C: All Mudokons look alike but not being a master of disguise, Abe has a distinctive tribal tattoo shown here in this artist's impression.



He may be a skinny dude in a loincloth but be warned, he can shrug off heavy arms fire like you would a buzzing insect.



These annoying creatures don't carry guns, but then they don't need to, what with all these spiritual powers.

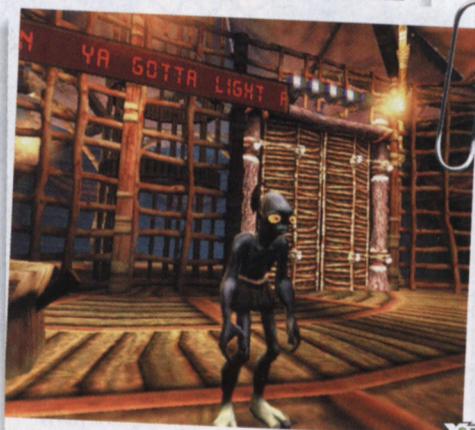




EXHIBIT D: Munch's ability to fly is largely unsubstantiated and photo experts have already issued a statement confirming this as a fake.



The cheeky criminal duo has the nerve to wave indifference at the Vykkers Corporation.

Vykkers Labs Test Subject Profile

Name: Munch

Species: Gabbit

Average life: 18 years

Don't let appearances fool you. Just because Munch is a cute looking creature doesn't mean he isn't dangerous. Just look at those Fuzzles – they're sweet, but go to pet one and you'd be considered lucky if you walked away only missing one arm.

Now Munch is a strange beast who comes from a gentle and social race known as the Gabbits. But this normally kind creature has built up an incredible amount of resentment over the past few years – something that has come to a head recently, what with his sole leg being broken in a bear trap.

Quite where this resentment comes from is a mystery. After all, you'd think he would be pleased that his people's lungs have been used to save Glukkons whose own organs aren't able to cope with the Lungbuster cigarettes. They should feel privileged that our lungs are compatible – you never know, a Gabbit may need a lung some day.

Unfortunately this isn't likely to happen, as Munch is the last of his race. Admittedly this is a mistake on the part of the Vykkers Corporation, which also sells the delightful delicacy Gabbier, made up of Gabbit eggs. Rumour has it there is one can of this left somewhere in Oddworld and Munch is on a mission to find it. Since being confined to a wheelchair he isn't the fastest of movers so we're not worrying yet, but Abe is rumoured to be helping him in his quest.

Munch is at home in the sea, able to swim with incredible speed and skill – not to mention being able to hold his breath in those lungs for obscene amounts of time. There have also been rumours of Munch being able to fly (see Exhibit D) but such reports are not to be believed. The Mudokon worker responsible for the scare mongering has been dealt with.

- An alien implant known as a 'Sonar Plug' in Munch's skull allows him to possess nearby machinery like cranes, security cameras and meatier equipment such as the 50-caliber Anaesthesia bots. We need to work on ways to block this.
- The annoying amphibian has been heard singing. Possible source of Christmas party entertainment?



With his broken leg and his amphibious nature, Munch needs a wheelchair to get around, occasionally putting him in pretty precarious situations.

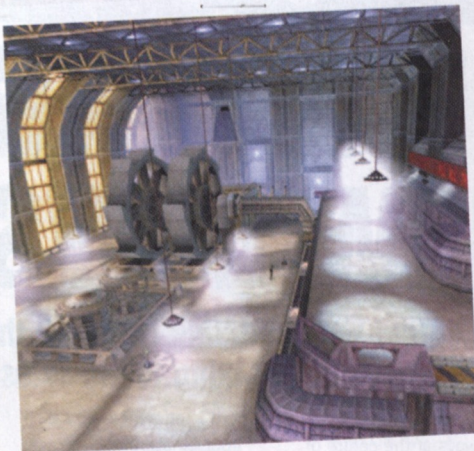


Habitat Study

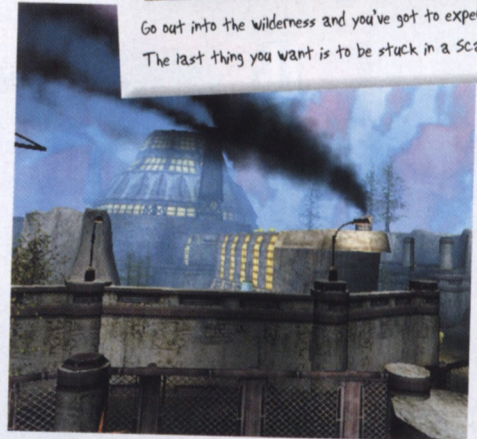
A major advantage of living on Oddworld comes in the form of the stunning environments. Opportunities for industrial expansion are there as far as the eye can see, in a massive world full of foul-smelling fresh air just waiting to be tainted by the sweet smell of factory fumes. After all, why look at a tree when you can gaze upon the cold technical wonders of a Vykkers factory? However, if we are ever to catch Abe and Munch we must understand their world...



Go out into the wilderness and you've got to expect wild beasts. The last thing you want is to be stuck in a Scarab herd like this.



It's always rewarding to see chaotic nature replaced by the strict regimental power of a huge conglomerate. It's here that we make much-craved, mass-market products like the Soulstorm Brew, Lungbuster cigarettes and Butt-flo laxatives. If Abe and Munch were out to cause as much damage as possible this is the place they would arrive at. Slave labour industries like these have often been the target of Abe's campaign and as a result security has been increased. Any unauthorised person is going to have a lot of Sligs to contend with.



We may not like it but unfortunately technology-free areas of Oddworld do exist – for the time being at least. This is the natural environment of the Mudokon and a whole host of other creatures – some beyond comprehension. Huts and villages are scattered throughout mountain ranges and forests full of weird and mysterious stories. A regular haunt of the average Mudokon is Alf's Rehab And Tea. This is where alcoholics come after a heavy night on Soulstorm Brew. Thankfully, rehabilitation success is low as the brew keeps selling.

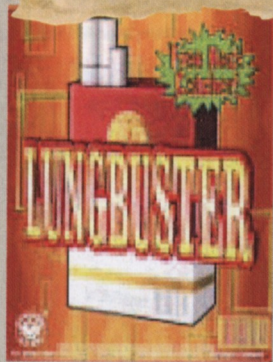


Anything we don't understand we fear – and we fear the Mudokon ceremonies a great deal. This storm circle shown here in these reconnaissance photos is a regular worshipping place for the more spiritually inclined Mudokon. Anyone who says the Mudokons aren't organised has no idea what they're talking about. Performing ceremonies like this requires a lot of concentration and once activated, the storm circle can be seen (and heard) from miles away.





Never overestimate the gullible consumer. Attached is a propaganda release on our forthcoming products from the Vykkers marketing department. We're also working on the definitive kids' sweet called 'Gum Rot' which is destined to be the next big thing.



LUNGBUSTER

The only 100% carcinogenic cigarette that is guaranteed to shorten your life span. Who wants to grow old anyway? We sure don't! Wandering through the forest in your dressing gown and slippers whilst constantly needing to empty your bladder – hardly a flattering image. Give yourself and your body the break it's been asking for – and when you do get lung cancer all you need to do is organise an operation with our surgeons.



BUTT-FLO

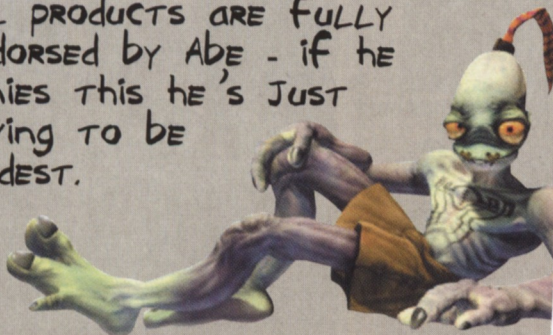
From the laxative-producing master comes one of the finest colon loosening products currently available without medical prescription. Never again will you have to worry about when to empty your system as Butt-flo (now in new chunky style!) can do it all for you. This product was tested under controlled conditions in the Vykkers labs on unsuspecting Mudokons – all of whom claimed it to be "an excellent stress reliever".



CHILL PILL

Why be glum all the time when you can rectify the situation with no need for psychological help or realistic fun? All you need to do is pop one of these Chill Pills and happiness is yours for the taking. You may think you don't need it but ask yourself where else are you going to find happiness? Besides, beneficial side effects include painful stomach cramps and the occasional swelling of joints – all at no extra cost to the user. We must be mad!

ALL PRODUCTS ARE FULLY ENDORSED BY ABE - IF HE DENIES THIS HE'S JUST TRYING TO BE MODEST.



REACHING NEW LOWS

Not content with polluting the land, the Vykkers industry is taking to the skies.

The Vykker brothers are always at the centre of village gossip and their latest zany move is just one in a long list of ideas that takes the stale biscuit out of the packet of life. They've created floating factories.

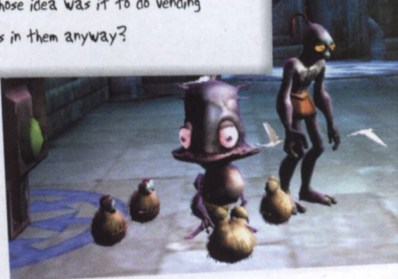
The company has been constantly turning over massive profits thanks to its medical products and genetically modified foods that are at the forefront of dark science. These profits are being reinvested into giant floating factories – the idea being that they will be free

from interference. So called 'troublemakers' like the self acknowledged Mudokon activist Abe are considered a major threat and to ensure that no damage can be done, the Vykkers are moving up to the clouds. This allows such horrible acts as animal testing to go on uninterrupted. Now only you can stop these crimes against humanity by boycotting Oddworld products. Refuse to be a consumer – together we are strong.

Reporter: Mike Richardson



Security must be increased – whose idea was it to do vending machines with Birtz Packer guns in them anyway?



Make sure this journalist pays a long visit to Irwin's lab!



Vykkers Labs Executive Profile

Name: Humphrey Vykkers

Position: Executive Implant And Brand Manager

Now the most prominent figure inside the Vykkers Labs, Humphrey Vykkers started his elaborate and sinister career in the fine foods division. Always at the forefront of technology, he first became famous for revolutionising the Gabbiar production process and seriously increased company profits.

He was soon promoted and went on to the snack foods division taking with him his uncanny ability to find a profit in the most unlikely of places. It was Humphrey who took the 'waste' out of toxic waste. From here the career beast landed on his feet again (not difficult for something with three legs) taking the position of Executive Implant And Brand Manager. It's from here that he currently oversees the entire range of Vykkers products.

Likes: Taking consumers' money
Dislikes: Abe
Working on: Classified



Vykkers Labs Executive Profile

Name: Irwin Vykkers

Position: Senior Pain Director, Consumer Pharmaceutical Division

If there's one creature you should fear it's Irwin Vykkers. To turn your back on him would be a grave mistake, as you'd probably find your spine ripped out and put into some form of experimental testing prior to being shipped off to the Boneworks factory for crushing. Needless to say he is a jewel in the Oddworld industrial sector.

Like all Vykkers, Irwin has four tiny little arms that look useless, but this hasn't stopped him from becoming the leader in pain-causing techniques. Both he and Humphrey have harnesses allowing them to use all manner of sharp pointy tools with ominous serrated edges. As the Senior Pain Director it's Irwin's job to systematically test every single Vykkers Labs product to the point of destruction - destruction of others, that is.

Likes: Torturing Fuzzles
Dislikes: Abe
Working on: Prolonging pain



The Vykker brothers are good bosses - here you can see the paid-for, in-house psychological counsellor consoling an unhappy Mudokon.



The Vykkers are often too busy with their work so the public face of the company comes from the Glukkons.



MUZT GET:
babychow
6 pack of soulstorm
fuzzle repellent
mudokon meat cakes



Offence Record

Subject: Abe

Date Of Birth: 1029

A regular rogue character, Abe has a long list of offences against the Magog Cartel that should serve as a lesson to the Vykkers Labs. We must increase security to avoid the embarrassment these other factories and production houses faced...



All those times we came so close.



Case File: Abe's Oddysee

File Number: PSONE1.1

Year Crime Committed: 1997

Up until this point Abe was nothing, a bum, a pointless number in the huge crowds of Mudokons working for the Magog Cartel. Following his actions in the Oddysee incident he is the best-known Mudokon in the world, and is even considered by fellow natives to be a hero.

Escaping from the Rupture Farms factory, where he worked as a floor wax engineer, Abe went on to destroy the Magog Cartel, including his former boss Molluck the Glukkon. The story goes that he had a vision telling him to do this. Perhaps we should revise the hallucinogenic properties in some of our products?



Case File: Abe's Exodus

File Number: PSONE1.2

Year Crime Committed: 1999

After his initial attack against the Oddworld industry Abe went into hiding, resurfacing to make himself known as a troublemaker all over again. His target of choice this time was the mining facility at Necrum, known to the locals as the sacred Mudokon city of the dead – they do have a tendency to be over dramatic.

On this quest Abe annoyingly managed to cure a lot of Mudokon addicts of their dependence on Soulstorm Brew – something that had a massive effect on our profit margins. Along the way he managed to disrupt work at the FeeCo Depot and the Bonewerks. He even had the nerve to laugh in our face by visiting the Slig Barracks. This kind of blatant disrespect must not happen again.



Military Report

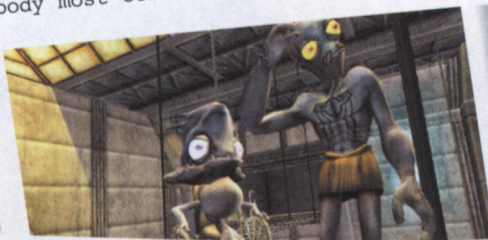
File Number: BMTH299900
Subject: New Slig Security

WARNING: This is a classified file and should you be reading it without official authorisation you are required to commit suicide.

All attempts in the past to stop Abe have been sadly unsuccessful, so we've decided to swing the odds in our favour a little. Arguably the main weakness in our security came from the Sligs. Security animals with biomechanical implants, the Sligs are trigger-happy loons with a worrying habit of sleeping on the job.

Please allow us to introduce the brand spanking new all-powerful Big Bro Slig. A soldier class variation on the original Slig these big hunks are kitted out to the max and, unlike worker Sligs, they actually know how to use their equipment. As well as sporting an oversized cannon for a gun they come with superior night vision goggles and a gas mask to protect them from any nasty smells.

If this doesn't sort the men from the Abes then the amazingly high levels of steroids pumping through the Slig's body most certainly will.



Not a Slig in sight. This is clearly not an acceptable situation.



The new Slig backs up a couple of the older models about to jump Munch.



he Xbox has the most impressive launch line up ever seen, and *Oddworld* is the game spearheading that launch. Odds are Sony is going to be slapping itself around the face a little for loosing this game to the Xbox.

It may have gone from side-scrolling platformer to free-roaming 3D adventure (always a worrying step) but the rich and vibrant

characters remain in this seriously twisted world. An *Oddworld*. A world complete with a real-time ecosystem where every animal has its place in the food chain and its own priorities in life. And in the centre of all this are a couple of hapless heroes, Munch and Abe, running around like headless chickens trying to bring sanity to a world that doesn't want it.

The addition of Munch in this game means that you're going to get quite a

bit of comedy love-hate banter with Abe, but you'll need to keep them both in check because teamwork is the key. Abe now has a much more advanced version of GameSpeak, allowing you to control fellow Mudokons, and his mind control abilities are still there, but you also need Munch. The wheelchair-bound creature could swim for his country and is also able to control mechanical devices thanks to a Vykkers implant.

Basically, this means there are going to be some superb puzzles to break through in order to get to that last remaining can of Gabbiar and Abe's imprisoned mother. The first two games on the PSone were more addictive than a Soulstorm Brew and tougher than a Fuzzle; from what we've seen so far you can guarantee many more sleepless nights chugging caffeine with Munch, Abe and an Xbox pad in your hand.

preview
BUFFY THE
VAMPIRE SLAYER

INFORMATION

Publisher Fox Interactive
Developer The Collective
Genre Adventure
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1
Weblink www.ea.com



WORDS: NERYS COWARD

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Wow! What a beautiful looking game, or should that be girl? Find more on our Web site!

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WALLPAPER MOVIES

ONE TO
WATCH!

XBOX

THE SLAYER FINALLY GETS THE
ATTENTION SHE DESERVES!

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

At last, this game has finally floated down from the mystical ether known only as 'development' and sunk its teeth into a console. Touted for the PC, the PlayStation and the Dreamcast, the developers of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* finally announced that the game would in fact only be appearing on the Microsoft's machine; the Xbox was judged by The Collective to be the only platform capable of faithfully creating their vision of The Chosen One.

Sarah Michelle Gellar's stunt double in the series was used for motion capturing, and the ever-wary writer/producer Joss Whedon has ensured that producers and creators from the series are playing a major part in the game's development to ensure that it remains faithful to the mythology of the show. The Collective has been just as insistent on staying faithful to the Buffy universe too, by recreating levels from instantly recognisable areas in the series. Sunnydale High and its library both feature (before its cataclysmic encounter

with an inter-dimensional portal and a fire-breathing 80-foot snake, that is) as well as the mall, the cemetery, the sunken church, and the abandoned mansion occupied by Angel.

Fans of the show will be impressed by the incredible attention paid to detail, as well as the presence of many of the stars of the show; although Buffy herself is the only playable character, her interaction with Angel, Giles, Willow, Xander and Cordelia is essential to plot development. The actors who play these characters have signed up

to do their own voiceovers too, although Sarah Michelle still remained noticeably absent from this list as we went to press.

All of the characters, playable and otherwise, are rendered beautifully, with many thousands of polygons each. Having a whole crowd of these characters on screen as well as intricate sets, magical special effects and fast fire-fighting moves is a feat the producers insist was only achievable on the Xbox. Buffy can perform a great many of her trademark martial arts attack and gymnastic moves, and

IN CLOSE-UP

Buffy's power gauge fills up as she successfully performs attacks. The more power she has, the better and more complex her combos.

IN CLOSE-UP

Buffy has been recreated right down to her finest details (we mean her eyes, but read whatever you want into it!) Even her ponytail swings with her punches!

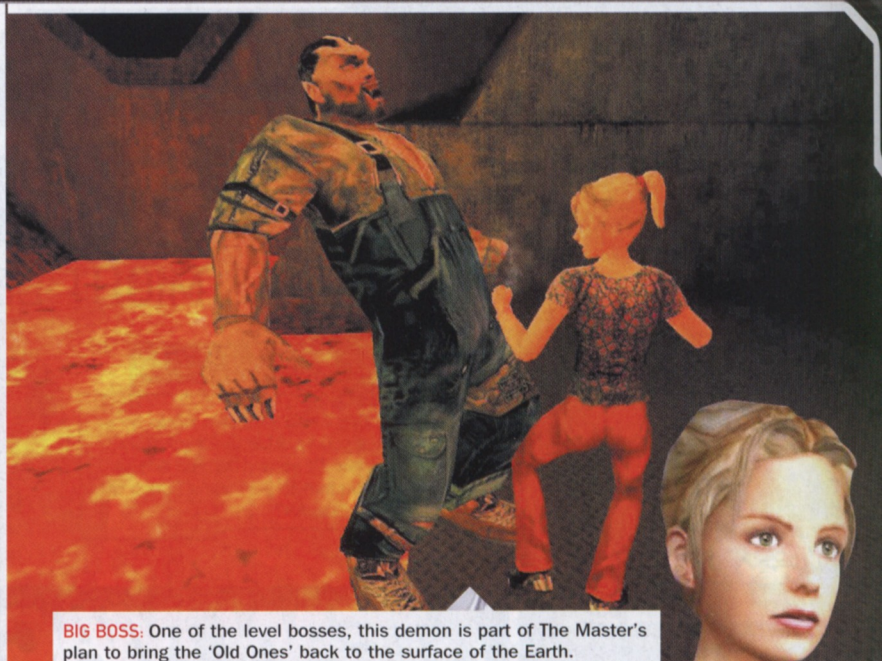
IN CLOSE-UP

Every bad guy has their own speciality moves; as well as numerous random baddies, Buffy faces Spike, Dru and The Master. Fans of the TV series will go mad for this!

BACK FROM THE DEAD

BUFFY IS DEAD, BUT THAT WON'T STOP HER FROM SAVING THE WORLD!

Buffy died at the end of season five of the TV show, but is thankfully returning in season six in, er, not dead form. Fortunately, this game is set before any of this life/death confusion, way back in season three, when Buffy was still seeing troubled vamp Angel and her school was still standing.



BIG BOSS: One of the level bosses, this demon is part of The Master's plan to bring the 'Old Ones' back to the surface of the Earth.

BIG FIGHT: Doing what she does best, Buffy takes on the might of the undead, looking better, fighting better and coming out with all the best lines.



VPL: Did they really have to put in her visible panty line? Was that entirely necessary?



WHAT IF...

...there was another playable character? As the series progressed, Buffy's best friend Willow became a very powerful witch and has perfected a range of extremely useful spells.

also has her 'Slayer sense' (the seventh sense that all slayers have which gives them instinctive ability to locate supernatural activity), as well as super-high jumps and quick healing. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* combines fighting, drama, humour, exploration and puzzle-solving in a stunning interactive 3D environment. Buffy is – if ever a TV character was – a ready-made videogame character and if the final version of the game delivers, avid fans and gamers alike will be in for a blood-sucking treat. ●

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**

**FANS OF
THE SHOW
GO MAD!**

"THE XBOX WAS JUDGED TO BE THE ONLY PLATFORM CAPABLE OF FAITHFULLY RECREATING THE CHOSEN ONE"

Buffy is visually stunning, and the facial mapping and movement of the characters is incredibly detailed and natural. The inclusion of not only the star 'goodies' but some of the old 'baddies' (as well as new ones) should make this a big hit.



SUMMARY: Looks fantastic, let's hope it plays well!

INFORMATION

Publisher.....GOD Games
Developer.....Terminal Reality
Genre.....Racing
Estimated Release.....Spring
Players.....TBC
Weblink.....www.4x4evolution.com



WORDS: ROY KIMBER

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WALLPAPER MOVIES

4X4 EVO

FOUR LEGS MIGHT BE GOOD, BUT FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE IS

WHAT IF...

...4x4 Evo 2 had a hidden mode allowing you to drive the truck from the classic TV series *The Fall Guy* in which you had to perform a bunch of awesome stunts?

R

ednecks, eh? Say what you like about 'em, they really know a good ride when they see one! What? No, their truck, we're talking about their truck, of course! Er... anyway, if you own a Dreamcast or a PlayStation2, you may well have come across a truck-based racer called *4x4 Evolution*. This game was fairly

well received in its way, although it did suffer a little from a less-than-desirable draw distance owing to the limitations of the respective consoles.

Enter the Xbox, with its oodles of processing power, and a sequel to *4x4 Evolution*, going by the name of *4x4 Evo 2*. Promising more than 100 different fully-licensed vehicles (did you even know there were that many different trucks out there?) *4x4 Evo 2* is an exciting prospect. The game features two distinct modes, the first of which is about pure racing. This mode allows you to take on up to eight other vehicles in a variety of weather conditions across no less than 32 different tracks. In itself, this is fine, but the thing about trucks – the important thing – is that unlike a lot of other motor vehicles, they don't actually require a specific road (hence the whole 'off-road vehicle' designation) and developer Terminal

MEAN MACHINES

CHECK OUT SOME OF THE SERIOUSLY RUGGED VEHICLES THE GAME OFFERS YOU...

If you can afford 'em, 4x4 trucks are a definite must-have item for any serious driver, and the beauty of *4x4 Evo 2* is that you can choose from the best! Just check out this little lot...



ROAD HOG: As the CPU player is distracted by a small rabbit, we make a break for it!



INCOMING!: It's never a good idea to stand around admiring the sunset in hillbilly country – you never know what might suddenly appear over the hill!



CEL DAMAGE

CARTOON BATTLE CAPERS FOR ALL AGES!

INFORMATION

Publisher.....EA
Developer.....Pseudo Interactive
Genre.....Party
Estimated Release.....14 March
Players.....1-4
Weblink.....www.celdamage.ea.com



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON



W

hilst most developers are trying to maximise the use of the Xbox's capabilities, Pseudo Interactive is going back to basics. The aptly named *Cel Damage* uses old-style cell-shading techniques to give a cartoon feel the likes of which you will never have seen before in a videogame.

To look at the screens you might think that this is a racing game – but you'd be wrong. This is a vehicular combat game where only the toughest 'toons survive – or at least those with the most powered-up cars. There are ten characters with their own machines to choose from, ranging from a Manga babe right down to a black and white duck – sounds good to us!

1ST OPINION XBM

A UNIQUE LOOK!

The whole cartoon notion allows for a free reign – odds are that anything you can imagine can't come close to the weird kind of things you can do in *Cel Damage*.

1ST
OPINION
XBOXLOOKS AND
PLAYS LIKE
A DREAM!

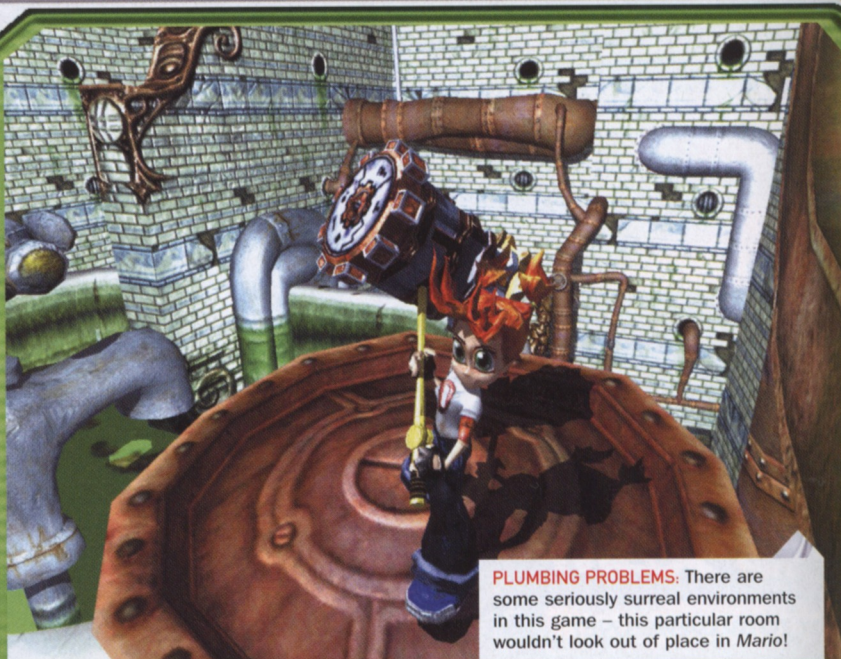
2

EVEN BETTER!

Reality had this in mind when it designed the game. Thus, in addition to a racing mode, 4x4 Evo 2 also offers an exploration-based option where rather than the gameplay being based around lap times and checkpoints, it focuses instead on fighting to be the first to tackle 70 mission objectives. The physics engine so far looks great and the only real question is whether there will be a multiplayer mode available, as Terminal Reality is concentrating on making the one-player experience everything it should be. Watch this space! ●

As things stand at the moment, 4x4 Evo 2 looks extremely promising. Anyone who's played *Monster Truck Madness* on the Nintendo 64 will know that the actual gameplay – in which you could drive a bunch of four-wheel drive vehicles practically anywhere you wanted – was fantastic, and was only let down by a few annoying bugs which were more than likely a result of the (comparatively) limited power of the console itself. As the Xbox has infinitely more processing power, there's no reason why *Evo 2* shouldn't be all that *Monster Truck Madness* was... and then some!

Off-road racing for the next generation!



PLUMBING PROBLEMS: There are some seriously surreal environments in this game – this particular room wouldn't look out of place in *Mario*!

MALICE:
KAT'S TALE

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THOSE HAMMERS!

i INFORMATION

Publisher Vivendi
Developer Argonaut
Genre Platform
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1
Weblink www.argonaut.com/malice



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

W

hen the Xbox was first shown off to an eager, eagle-eyed public, *Malice* was one of the titles that was used to prove just what the system could do. And rightly so, as this twisted little adventure game from developer Argonaut looks like it's going to be well worth the wait.

Essentially *Malice* is a glorified platform game with a few twists thrown in to keep your brain ticking over. The game follows a deceptively angelic little girl who accidentally lets loose a fire demon called Malice (an easy mistake). To defeat it you need to battle through 25 weird and wonderful levels, collecting magic spells and cool weapons as you go. A game worth keeping your eye on. ●

1ST
OPINION
XBOX

GET HAMMERED!

This platform/adventure hybrid appears to have enough original elements and rich characters to make it more appealing than others in the genre. Personally we can't wait to get our hands on that huge hammer and start swinging!



CELL OUT? Just because this game doesn't use 3D-rendered worlds doesn't mean it can't look good!



HOT FLOW: We haven't found a game yet where the lava isn't dangerous so best to steer clear!



"THIS IS A VEHICULAR COMBAT GAME WHERE ONLY THE TOUGHEST TOONS SURVIVE"



"THE GAME FOLLOWS A DECEIVINGLY ANGELIC LITTLE GIRL WHO ACCIDENTALLY LETS LOOSE A FIRE DEMON CALLED MALICE"

INFORMATION

Publisher Microsoft
Developer Bungle Software
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1-4
Weblink www.bungie.com/products/halo/halo.htm



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

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WALLPAPER MOVIES



IT MAY HAVE AN ANGELIC NAME BUT THERE ARE NO FRIENDLY TEA PARTIES HERE!

HALO

There are a lot of people out there who have been counting each passing minute, waiting patiently for this game's release. Now that date with fate is nearly upon the world – the most impressive first-person shooter ever devised is a reality. This is *Halo*.

The problem with all first-person shooters so far is that they've been far too restrictive. You've had the odd ground-breaking gimmick with games like *Half-Life* and *Red Faction* but up till now there hasn't really been a fully-

immersed, restriction-free experience. This is where *Halo* steps in, giving you dynamic story-led battles full of small strategy elements, and allowing you to control everything – and do anything you want with it.

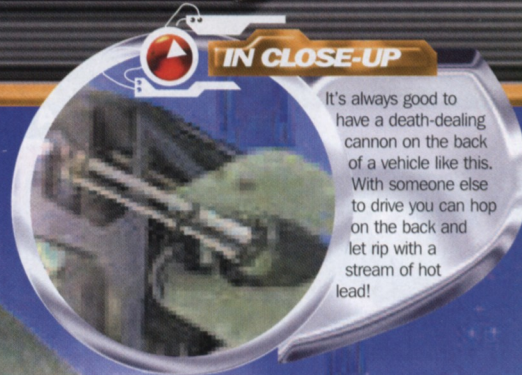
As with most games of its type you begin *Halo* with the odds stacked heavily against you. Set in the future, you are the last hope for the human race – which has been royally messed up by an alien group known as the Covenant. You take the last stand alongside fellow human victims on an artificially created alien planet that is

basically shaped like a massive donut... hence the name *Halo*.

Sadly, no matter how cool it would be, this is not covered in sugar like most doughnuts. Instead it is a huge world, complete with mountain ranges, beaches, buildings and other such wonders begging to be peppered with shrapnel and pebble-dashed by brains. An entire world is just waiting to be explored as you uncover the deep, dark secret of the evil Covenant. Your travels take you across vast expanses of terrain and into buildings that run deep inside the centre of the

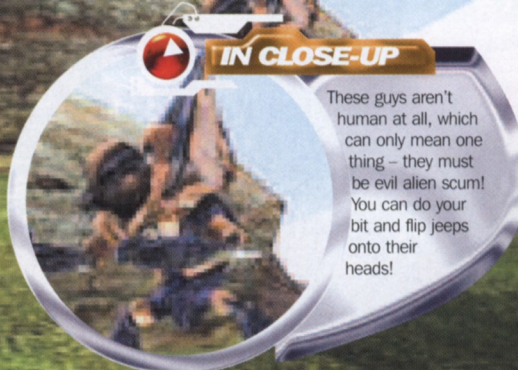
ring. Of course, when it comes to covering great distances your mortal feet simply aren't good enough to get the job done – not unless you're a very patient person anyway! You are set specific missions in the game that need to be completed, such as attacking outposts, rescuing comrades or stealing technology, but it's entirely up to you how you achieve that goal. Tackle it on foot like a man with your army ▶

IN CLOSE-UP



It's always good to have a death-dealing cannon on the back of a vehicle like this. With someone else to drive you can hop on the back and let rip with a stream of hot lead!

IN CLOSE-UP



These guys aren't human at all, which can only mean one thing – they must be evil alien scum! You can do your bit and flip jeeps onto their heads!

WHAT IF...

...the world really was shaped like a polo? It would certainly make getting to places a hell of a lot easier! Planes could just fly across the middle, eliminating the need for lengthy flights.

"YOU
ARE THE
LAST
HOPE
FOR THE
HUMAN
RACE"



THE BIG END: He must be a hit with the ladies – have you ever seen such a ginormous muzzle flash!



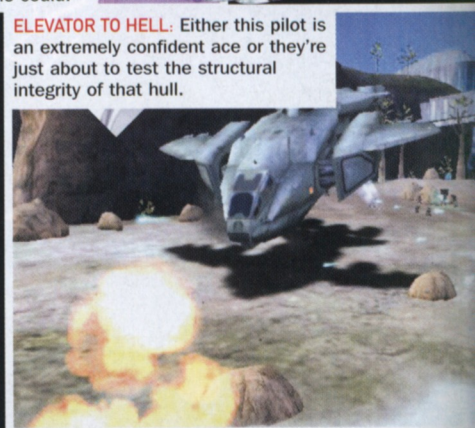
BUG HUNT: He looks dubious... quick, fill his vile body with shrapnel until he is nothing more than a twitching mass.



ULTRAVIOLET ULTRA-COOL: Drawn just like a moth to the light this unfortunate marine is about to have his flesh stripped from his bones – well, he could!



ELEVATOR TO HELL: Either this pilot is an extremely confident ace or they're just about to test the structural integrity of that hull.



TEASE TO PLEASE

FIRST ANNOUNCED OVER TWO YEARS AGO, THIS GAME HAS CREATED QUITE A BUZZ!

Just like any good war, this game has had a long running propaganda campaign. When it was first announced for the PC way back in the summer of 1999 early images (like this one) stirred the average first-person shooting fanatic into an orgasmic frenzy. Understandable really considering this is the most ambitious project on the FPS front since *Half-Life*. Now the game is finally coming out, will it live up to two years of anticipation? Oh, who are we trying to kid, *Halo* is going to be bigger than Pavarotti in one of those comical sumo wrestling suits.



**"THE SPECIAL
EFFECTS ON
DISPLAY FROM THE
BATTLEFIELD ARE
UNDENIABLY
BREATHTAKING"**

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

WHEN THINGS KICK OFF WE KNOW EXACTLY WHAT SIDE TO BUTTER THE BREAD...

The marines in this game do seem to be at a distinct advantage. They have badass rifles complete with grenade launchers, strap-on torches and magazine clips the size of a small country's arms reserves. To add insult to injury you get to use all manner of vehicles – and check out that cool-looking eyepiece! Presumably this is to keep you updated on the battlefield. However, when all this fancy technology fails you can also communicate with your team in *Halo* through various hand gestures.



CHAOS THEORY: Enter a battlefield and you've got to expect fire coming from all directions – just make sure none of it hits you!



► at your side or jump in one of the many crafts to gain a bit of mechanical assistance. If you do choose to try your hand at playing pilot or driver the camera view will switch to third-person to give you a good view of the surrounding area – not to mention your shiny new toy!

To give you an idea of just how much time has been put into this game, all of the vehicles have a strong physics system applied to them. The jeep, for example, features independent suspension for each wheel and should you crash (perish the thought!) your

fancy new vehicle does turn into a damaged wreck. Amusingly, if you hit something head-on at high speeds the odds are that you'll fly right through the windscreen too!

Like the vehicles, the weapons in the game are split between human and Covenant races, but you're free to use whatever you can lay your justice-dealing paws on. There are loads of tools for the job and you will find yourself using anything from a cold, brutal machete to an over-the-top rocket launcher. Impressively, if you do 'create' a large explosion then you find dirt erupting

from the ground and, as the smoke clears, a crater appears where level ground once was!

The special effects on display from the battlefield are undeniably breathtaking. Subtle particle effects, smooth hi-res texture-mapping and real-time shadow and lighting techniques are just the tip of the iceberg in a game that looks as good as it plays. A rich sci-fi fantasy universe has been created for you to savour alongside a twisting story line with complex characters.

“USE ANYTHING FROM A COLD, BRUTAL MACHETE TO AN OVER-THE-TOP ROCKET LAUNCHER”



LETS ROCK: It's gorgeous moments like this that make you want to buy two copies of the game just in case one breaks.



ECHO ECHO: The buildings in this game aren't just there for show – some of the indoor locations in this game are absolutely massive.





GREEN AND MEAN: That's not fair – how come one bloke gets combats and maybe a bit of Kevlar whilst the other dude sports the latest in power armour!



It's rare for one game to gel this many elements together successfully, but this is where *Halo* excels over other titles.

Another factor that allows the Bungie development team to sport a smug grin is the enemy AI. Now, a perfect human-like player is never possible but computer-controlled opponents are getting better and better with each gaming evolution, and *Halo* is at the forefront of that. Both the enemy and the allied forces in this game react to sound and light, as well as working in tactical squads to achieve objectives or seeking cover when threatened. In team-based games good AI is an absolute must but, as we said, there is no substitute for a human player.

This may be a single-player game but when you've got a couple of other people lined up there's a highly-enjoyable multiplayer marathon ready to be unleashed. Up to four players can either compete against each other in a split-screen mode or play through the main game co-operatively! Thankfully, you're not restricted to split-screen play as there is the option, if you're feeling flash, to link several machines together for a LAN-style set-up. With this elaborate tangle of cables you get not only the option of a screen to yourself but there's no danger of 'accidental' sneak peaks from the other players.

This is one extremely strong title in the launch line-up (or should that be yet another strong title!) and those that have been twiddling their thumbs and eagerly waiting will not be disappointed. Say your goodbyes to all the first-person shooters you've seen so far and *Halo* to the next generation on the all-singing, all-dancing, all-powerful Xbox. ●

"YOUR TRAVELS TAKE YOU ACROSS VAST EXPANSES OF TERRAIN AND INTO BUILDINGS"

TICKET TO RIDE

YOU CAN USE YOUR BARE HANDS TO KILL IF YOU WANT BUT WE PREFER BIG GUNS!

The most exciting prospect about *Halo* is the ability to use various modes of transport – something much needed – to traverse the huge world. Various crafts can be commanded in the game including giant dropships, tanks, jeeps and light aircraft from all of the races on the planet. The perfect tools to cover a lot of ground and kill a lot of enemy soldiers into the bargain!

1



BACKUP IS HERE: Some of the bigger ships like this beast can be used to transport soldiers and smaller vehicles.

2



BUGGING OUT: Fast, manoeuvrable and (more importantly) equipped with a huge mounted assault cannon! Let's kick ass!

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**

**LOOK OUT
UNREAL
CHAMP!**

When a game has this much hype surrounding it fears are always going to run rampant that it may not live up to expectations, but *Halo* is in safe hands with Bungie. The development team have created other masterpieces including *Marathon* which, strangely, features similar character races, elements and timelines to *Halo*! The lack of online play does cause some concern but the four-player mode more than makes up for this oversight. You'll be able to read the full review in XBM soon.

COMMANDER The first-person shooter to end them all!



IN CLOSE-UP

This is your boat. You can tell that because it's the one you control – and it's kicking ass! Just don't ask us what all the levers do quite yet – we're still playing!

INFORMATION

Publisher Microsoft
Developer Stormfront Studios
Genre Action
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1-4
Weblink www.microsoft.com/games/home/games.asp?g=159

Blood Wake

WORDS: ROY KIMBER

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EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES

ACTION OUT AT SEA!

XBOX

TIRED OF WAR ON LAND? THEN WHY NOT TAKE THE COMBAT TO THE HIGH SEAS...

BLOOD WAKE

WHAT IF...

...the game offered the opportunity to try a more laid-back approach, putting you in command of a small ferry with the aim being to make money by taking small parties of OAPs on boat trips?

W

hen Kevin Costner came up with the idea of a high-octane action epic set entirely on water – *Waterworld* – he was hit with a serious amount of flak from just about every critic who could scribble his name, despite producing what was – in essence – a fairly watchable movie. Developer Stormfront Studios is doubtless hoping to receive slightly less criticism and somewhat more success with its first Xbox project, *Blood Wake*.

The game is set in an alternate reality – not one where the Germans won the war

or anything, but where three hostile forces battle for supremacy over an area that's mostly covered in water – and thus the majority of the combative confrontations take place on the sea.

Of the three factions – the nation of Iriyan, the Iron Empire and the Shadow Clan – you're playing for the latter, a rebel faction rather than an empire which, of course, makes them the smallest and least well-armed of the three protagonists, but consequently the pluckiest. As a novice officer you're given command of a fairly basic boat and must prove yourself in

combat in order to progress through the ranks to bigger and better boats, with the ultimate aim of establishing naval domination for your rebel mates.

This is the objective of the one-player mode and to accomplish this you need to fight your way through 25-odd missions of increasing difficulty in a variety of exotic-looking locations. Mission objectives include reconnaissance, attack and defence of enemy and allied bases, night raids, escort duties and all-out, honest-to-goodness mass naval engagements. And like many games these days, physics is

IN CLOSE-UP

This is one of the enemy boats. It's on fire because you just shot it. Shouldn't have got in the way, should it? Oh, the feeling of satisfaction you get...

IN CLOSE-UP

This is one of the enemy's fortresses. In a minute we're going to invade it and eat all the choccy biscuits they've got stashed in the kitchen.

RAMMING SPEED: Out of the way muppets! This is One-Eyed Peg-Legged Bluebeard, and I'm coming through!

CHINA SEAS: What the... when did the Chinese start making massive, heavily-armed sea fortresses, eh?

WHERE'S KEV?: Unbeknown to anyone, the floating city from *Waterworld* makes a cameo appearance!

PILOT POWER: Those two blokes don't look very happy – and hasn't the one on the left got a long neck?

IT'S SUPER-BOAT!

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE? NAH...

For all the skating fans out there, boards aren't the only way to catch some serious air! Once you've mastered the way that your boat handles in *Blood Wake*, you can make it do some pretty damn cool stuff!



UP FROM THE DEPTHS: Whizzing along the water on your engine propellers is great fun! Or, if you prefer something more relaxing, sit back and enjoy the clear blue water!

OOPS!

SEE, THIS IS WHY YOU NEED REGULAR MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS...

The enemy fortress was bearing up well to our attacks... until someone forget to turn the gas completely off after they'd finished cooking their baked beans.



WE

one of the primary concerns of the development team.

You can't really tell quite so well from the screenshots here, but the water effects are nothing short of drop-dead gorgeous. The rolling waves look just like real water and – even better – they react like it too. So, as a boat moves through the water a wake is created which isn't just a graphical touch – just like a real boat wake it affects other objects in the water, so hit it fast enough and your boat may well take off! This kind of effect might sound magical, but with the power of the Xbox, before long ▶



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...

BLOOD WAKE'S NOT THE FIRST GAME TO FEATURE REALISTIC WATER EFFECTS...

If you've got a PlayStation2 then you might have seen another water-based game that has some nice water physics, namely *Splashdown* from Infogrames. This title was well received for precisely that reason but unfortunately featured not a lot in the way of serious gunfights, as it was basically a racing game. Well worth a look though, if you like that sort of thing.



WET AND WILD: Programming the perfect water effect seems to have become the Holy Grail for many development teams.

PUNY: Your flare-gun won't save you now, you pathetic little yacht! All ahead full, prepare to ram!



"THE WATER EFFECTS ARE NOTHING SHORT OF DROP-DEAD GORGEOUS"

SETTING THE XBOX ON FIRE!

If you're one of those people who's been crying out for a decent water-based combat game then *Blood Wake* is definitely going to be one that floats your boat. The way that the craft handle is incredibly realistic, without the problem of seasickness rearing its ugly head – or the problem of drowning when your boat gets sunk, for that matter. *Blood Wake* is going to be a definite must-have title.



SUMMARY: A real Xbox showcase game!

►we'll be taking them for granted. Until then, though, let's just settle down and drool appreciatively.

Of course, water effects aren't what you buy a game like this for – let's face it, if you wanted nice water you could buy yourself a pond simulator or something. No, what you'll be wanting would be adrenaline-pumping action, masses of weapons and explosions by the bucket-load. Fortunately, then, that *Blood Wake* has all this... and more! From the normal machine guns, rockets and cannons to more nautical torpedoes and mines, there's plenty of firepower available with which to kick the enemy craft's respective asses (or

should that be assii?) Several of the weapons also utilise multiple ammo types, so when you're trying to choose between the 'deluxe chaingun with marble finish' and the 'big boy rocket launcher' you'll also be able to ponder the pros and cons of armour-piercing or explosive rounds.

With the amount of fighting craft available (ten at last count), some fantastic graphics, awesome weapons and realistic physics, *Blood Wake* looks like being a sure-fire Xbox success – and we haven't even mentioned the manic four-player deathmatch play yet. Watch out for a review of this one around launch time. ●



PHALLIC SYMBOLS: Will you look at those torpedoes! Makes you proud to be a man it does... er, or something...

"LET'S JUST SETTLE DOWN AND DROOL APPRECIATIVELY"

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INFORMATION

Publisher Tecmo
Developer Team Ninja
Genre Fighting
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1-4
Weblink www.xbox.com/Games/fighting/doa3.htm

Dead or Alive 3

WORDS: SIMON CANN

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EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES

A
TECMO
TRIUMPH!
XBOX

IN CLOSE-UP

No doubt the male members of the games-buying public will be pleased to see the return of the buxom female fighters. We'll be entertained late into the night!

IN CLOSE-UP

As in the previous *Dead or Alive* titles on other consoles, combat will be extremely fluid. Counter-attacks will also still be a key feature of the game.

DEAD OR ALIVE

TECMO'S ASTONISHING XBOX BEAT-EM-UP WARMS UP TO KNOCK OUT THE

WHAT IF...

...you could download new fighters from Tecmo's Internet site and save them on your hard drive? Fingers crossed, this may well become a reality sooner rather than later.

R

unning on a licensed version of SEGA's state of the art (for the time) Model 2 board, Tecmo's 1996 *Dead or Alive* coin-op was dismissed by many as a 'me too' *Virtua Fighter 2* clone. Indeed, only the unusually large and rather wobbly 'assets' of the game's female fighters made it stand out from the crowd. Even an excellent conversion to the ill-fated SEGA Saturn console and then later the

PlayStation did little to lift the game above the level of cult status.

However, this would change when the game's sequel, *Dead or Alive 2*, arrived in 1999. Retaining the solid gameplay mechanics (and, of course, the aforementioned wobbly female assets) of its predecessor, *DOA2* introduced several key new gameplay elements to the 3D beat-'em-up genre. Most notably, the inclusion of multi-tiered fight arenas

allowed for combatants to be punched/kicked through destructible barriers (also, through windows and off cliffs) and plummet down to lower levels – where the fighting would continue unabated. Secondly, it pioneered the concept of tag battles (at least in the 3D realm), a concept that would be 'borrowed' (but not as well implemented) by Namco's lacklustre *Tekken Tag Tournament*.

It was now clear that Tecmo was no longer an imitator, but obviously an innovator. Suffice to say, when the Japanese softco announced that the third instalment of its *Dead or Alive* series was to be exclusive to the Xbox it confirmed a very

“DEAD OR ALIVE 3 LOOKS SET TO BE THE KILLER APP FOR XBOX THAT EVERY NEW CONSOLE SO CRUCIALLY NEEDS”

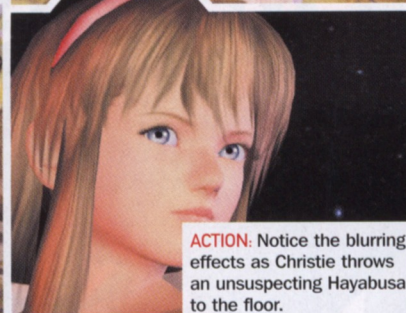


IN THE BEGINNING

The *Dead or Alive* series has come a long way since it first appeared back in 1996. Just take a look at these images of the previous two titles and you'll realise just how big a leap DOA3 represents over its six year old granddaddy.



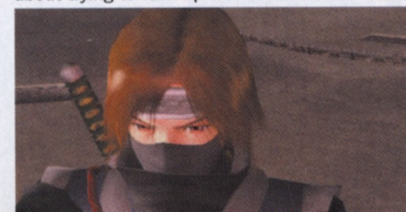
WATCH OUT! As you might expect, certain blows are more powerful than others.



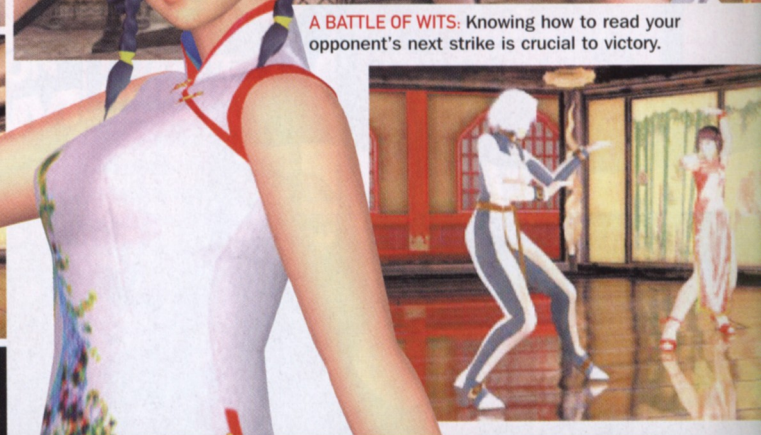
ACTION: Notice the blurring effects as Christie throws an unsuspecting Hayabusa to the floor.



DIRTY BOYS: You'll find some incredible reflection techniques but don't even think about trying to look up the ladies' skirts!



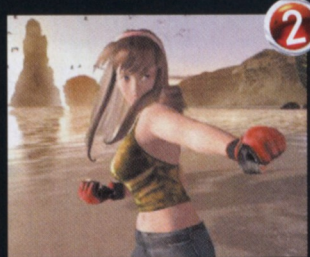
A BATTLE OF WITS. Knowing how to read your opponent's next strike is crucial to victory.



ONCE, TWICE...

...AND YES, THREE TIMES A LADY

Yes, okay, so several of the game's female fighters have some fairly impressive chest pillows (albeit virtual ones). With that said, please try and keep in mind the fact there's more to *Dead or Alive 3* than this. If, however, you're getting a little bit too excited why not take a shower (a cold one would probably be best).



E 3

COMPETITION!

important fact. Yes indeed, much to the chagrin of Sony, the Xbox console is – despite ill-informed accounts to the contrary – being taken very seriously by the larger Japanese videogame corps. The vision and innovation of developer Team Ninja (headed by the outspoken Tomonobu Itagaki), coupled with the ludicrous power afforded by Microsoft's new console, will no doubt change the way gamers perceive fighting titles.

Without descending into hyperbole, *Dead or Alive 3* is quite simply one of the most technically impressive games ever seen (and it's still not fully finished yet). Both the combatants and the locations they fight in display a level of detail previously unheard ▶

► of in this type of game. The fighters themselves look staggeringly lifelike, thanks to their incredible animation and breathtaking level of detail. For example, perform a kick and as your fighter's ground-based leg takes more weight you'll see individual muscles moving. It may sound trivial but the effect, when

coupled with everything else going on in the game, makes you realise just what a labour of love this was for the team.

Characters old (Bass, Tina and Kasumi) and new (the Gi-clad Hitomi and white-haired

Christie) make an appearance and all are animated with a level of fluidity that makes similar games of this ilk look positively archaic by comparison. Punches, kicks and throws are all delivered with an almost balletic grace and as before reversal moves and counter-strikes play a pivotal role in each bout – lending the game a pleasing feeling of depth. It may be the oldest cliché in the book, but watching as two DOA3 fighters engage in combat could easily convince you that there are two living, breathing people trapped in your telly (honest).

However, what really impresses is the way in which the fighters interact with the game's gorgeously realised backdrops. In one stage footprints (which remain throughout the bout) can be seen in snow, whilst a vigorous kick will result in an

especially convincing spray of snow particles. A lavishly detailed beach stage sees a fully animated flock of birds flying overhead, whilst another environment allows fighters to throw each other into surrounding stalagmites (these shatter in a suitably lifelike fashion). Most impressive of all (and most satisfying) is watching an opponent being smashed into a nearby object and witnessing the incredibly lifelike animation that accompanies the collision (they really do wrap themselves around trees – impressive is not the word).

However, all this graphical finery would be academic were *Dead or Alive 3* not backed up by some solid gameplay. Fortunately, it is in this area that the game delivers in spades. Having honed its skills in the previous two games Team Ninja looks



NEW GIRL: This Gi-clad female fighter is another new addition to the line-up. Her name is Hitomi and she can pack a deceptively hard punch for her size.

MY FAVE: Almost all of the old favourites will be making a return, including Hayabusa and Bass – who, as you can see, is taking a bit of a beating here.



“DEAD OR ALIVE 3 IS QUITE SIMPLY ONE OF THE MOST TECHNICALLY IMPRESSIVE GAMES EVER SEEN”

set to deliver one of the most well-rounded fight experiences yet witnessed in the virtual arena. Full 3D movement has become de rigueur these days and as you might expect is included here. Sidestepping manoeuvres can be performed with either a double tap of the D-pad or through the use of the Xbox controller's analogue stick.

A ludicrous amounts of flamboyant attacks and defensive moves are also included, all of which can be strung together to form devastating combinations. In terms of audio the game looks to be less dynamic, although the bone-crunching sound effects that accompany each blow will send a shiver down even the most ardent of beat-'em-up fans' spines.

Ultimately, *Dead or Alive 3* looks set to be the killer app for Xbox that every new

console so crucially needs. With *Tekken 4* (which even in coin-op form is distinctively average) and SEGA's conversion of *Virtua Fighter 4* likely to suffer in transition to the home consoles, it would seem that fighting game aficionados will be waiting for Tecmo's hugely ambitious fighter for their brawling needs.

Due to arrive on the US Xbox launch day of 15 November, this is practically a dead cert to be there on day one when Microsoft's super console hits these shores next year. Watch out for a review of the game soon, when XBM will give you the full lowdown on whether or not *Dead or Alive 3* delivers on its enormous potential. ●



WORLD IN MOTION

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Team Ninja has gone to painstaking lengths to ensure that the characters all move in an exceptionally fluid fashion. Furthermore, each fighter accurately mimics the motions of their real-life martial art. The results look stunning.



I KNOW KUNG-FU: It almost goes without saying that martial arts manoeuvres such as this should not be attempted without the guidance of a level-headed adult!

THE BEACH

WHO NEEDS A HOLIDAY?

Each of the game's environments is packed with subtle little touches. However, special mention must go to the beach stage – not only does the sea look good enough to swim in, but you can also marvel at the birdies (the feathered variety, of course). Boom and indeed boom.



THE ULTIMATE FIGHTER!

Tecmo's latest addition to the beat-'em-up genre has the potential to wipe the floor with all its rivals. Not only does it contain some of the most incredible visuals ever seen in a videogame, but it looks set to deliver on the gameplay front as well. With its varied selection of fighters and massive list of moves this should prove to be a massive hit with beat-'em-up connoisseurs. Oh, and in case you hadn't already noticed, the women with the ample assets are still included. Fight fans and perverts alike will no doubt be rejoicing.

SUMMARY: The first Xbox 'killer app' – a must!



HMM. BUNS: Yes, this game is certainly going to be a favourite with the more discerning gentlemen out there!

FALCONE: INTO THE MAELSTROM

INFORMATION

Publisher Virgin
Developer In-house
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release Summer
Players 1-2
Weblink www.virgininteractive.co.uk



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

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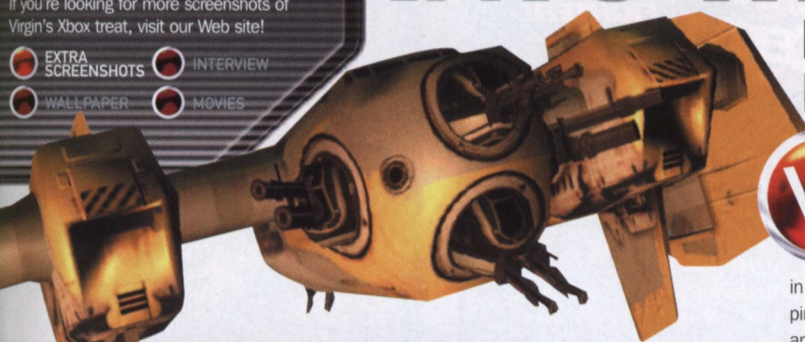


SEXY VISUALS: Oh yes this is exactly what we're talking about! This game is going to make you proud to own an Xbox.



FALCONE: INTO THE MAELSTROM

PIRATE-LIKE SKULDUGGERY IN THE FAR REACHES OF FUTURISTIC SPACE.



When originality becomes increasingly difficult there is only one thing left to do – merge genres. This is exactly what *Falcone* does, giving you the best of two worlds – an FPS in space! You play *Falcone* himself, a space pirate who has been left for dead in a space anomaly (see, *Star Trek* is educational!) known

as the Maelstrom. You come back to find the galaxy under the reign of the evil Black Dog and it's your job to take the power back and become the only bad boy in space. This involves taking part in huge space battles and boarding ships to loot for goodies. The potential here is huge and the numerous *2000AD* influences should pull the crowds like a wet T-shirt contest. ●

INFORMATION

Publisher Midway
Developer In-house
Genre Racing
Estimated Release Spring
Players 1-4
Weblink www.arcticthunder.com



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

ARCTIC THUNDER

THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SNOW BUSINESS...

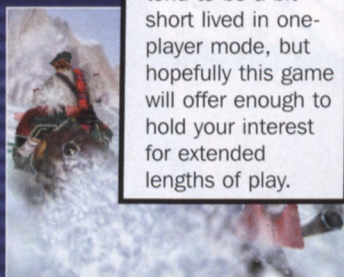


When Midway decides to create a racing game you know you're going to get something chaotic and fun. Full of arcade goodness, *Arctic Thunder* is like *Road Rash* on snow – times ten!

The basic principle is the same as any other arcade racer – get to the finish line using any means necessary and look cool doing it. This game is full of short cuts, boost power-ups and ramps allowing you to do just that, but for the more devious player you've also got slightly more underhand tactics to fall back on like missiles. This may all be mindless stuff but there are some days when you just don't fancy diving into a full-blown adventure! ●



Arcade conversions are always good for a quick laugh and usually make fantastic multiplayer games. However, they can tend to be a bit short lived in one-player mode, but hopefully this game will offer enough to hold your interest for extended lengths of play.



DON'T LOOK DOWN: Now this is what you call dangerous – whatever you do don't try this little stunt at home, kids!

INFORMATION

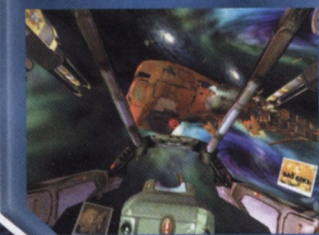
Publisher Interplay
Developer Confounding Factor
Genre Adventure
Estimated Release Spring
Players 1
Weblink www.confoundingfactor.com/galleon



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**
**SEXY
SPACE
COMBAT!**

Combining space battles and first-person shooting elements may seem a little bizarre, but when you think about it they're not exactly that different. Space just adds an extra axis. This is an extremely exciting project and should turn out to be an absolute stunner of a game.



SLAMMERS Very PC influenced, but looks hot!

NEAR MISS: Collisions can still happen out in the wilds of space!



"IT'S YOUR JOB TO TAKE THE POWER BACK AND BECOME THE ONLY BAD BOY IN SPACE"

GALLEON

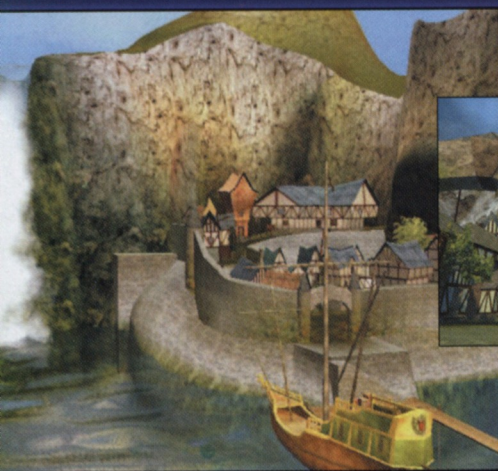
EXPLORE THE OCEANS, LARA-STYLE!

There are hundreds of epic games due out on the Xbox, all queuing up to suck hours from your life, and *Galleon* is one such game. An epic fantasy adventure set on the stormy high seas, this game takes you to countless islands all rich in small, painstaking details.

You play Rhama the captain of a ship known as the Endeavour who finds himself caught up in an adventure following a mysterious boat. This is primarily a story-led game but you will be doing plenty of fighting, and *Galleon* does promise a completely unique sword-fighting system. We'll have to wait and see. ●

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**
**LIKE
LARA?**

Developed by members of the team originally responsible for *Tomb Raider*, this new game certainly has a lot of weight behind it. Of course, *Galleon* has infinitely more depth though!



SEGA GT 2002

A GRAN TURISMO BEATER? IT JUST MIGHT BE...



RED OR DEAD: Red cars go faster – it's a well-known fact!



INFORMATION

Publisher SEGA
Developer Wow Entertainment
Genre Racing
Estimated Release Spring
Players 1-2
Weblink www.sega.com



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

G

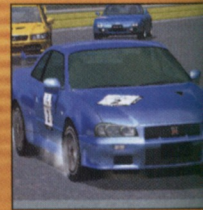
ran *Turismo* for the SEGA boys on Dreamcast, this racing game has built up quite a following. The reputation is quite justified too, as *SEGA GT* is an impressive game, and one that is now ready to be made even more breathtaking on the Xbox.

The big selling point of this game is the selection of cars, an important part of any racing title, and *SEGA GT 2002* offers you 130 smoothly rendered beasts to choose from. Now this would be enough for most people, but if you've got the patience you can piece together your own car from scratch – there are over two million combinations! The game is even rumoured to use the hard drive for updates – well, you can never get enough... ●

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**

ALL A BIT TOO POLISHED?

Having played *SEGA GT* at the recent X01 Xbox event in Cannes, we must admit it's a little lacklustre. All the pieces are there to make it a *Gran Turismo* for the Xbox, but the title seems to be missing that extra-special touch a game needs to succeed.



INFORMATION

Publisher TDK Interactive
Developer Digital Illusions
Genre Adventure
Release 14 March
Players 1
Weblink www.shrekgame.com

SHREK

WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

TOTAL GAMES.net XBOX

XBOX TOTALGAMES.NET

We've got a great movie of Shrek in motion on TotalGames.net - check it out!

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES

SH

A FOUL-SMELLING, ARROGANT BEAST

Movie licences are renowned for being bad deals when it comes to videogames - especially with a film as big as *Shrek*! This is the first of what is sure to be a long line of movie-licensed games on the Xbox, but strangely enough it looks like it may just break the cash cow stereotype.

The good thing about *Shrek* is that it's such a strong licence, if this game gets

anywhere near the quality of the film TDK will be laughing. If you haven't seen the film you really should be ashamed of yourself because it is one of (if not the) funniest film of the year. Too easily dismissed as a kiddie cartoon romp, it actually has much more of an adult sense of humour - something that has been translated perfectly into the game.

One thing that hasn't been carried over, however, is the story. You get a brand

"IF THIS GAME GETS ANYWHERE NEAR THE QUALITY OF THE FILM TDK WILL BE LAUGHING"

IN CLOSE-UP

This game has some superb character detail. So many polygons have been crammed into Shrek's face he looks just like the big-screen ogre did!

IN CLOSE-UP

Keeping the same tone as the film, Shrek is a foul creature, something demonstrated perfectly by one of his attacks - a gaseous green cloud!

IN CLOSE-UP

The game abuses classic fairytales. On this mission you have to save lots of baby eggs - oh come on, you know how it goes: 'All the king's horses...'

REK

WITH AN ASS FOR A SIDEKICK – AND THIS IS THE HERO!

spanking new tale for your money that pretty much follows on directly after the film. In the big-screen version, the fat, green ogre Shrek became a people's champion after he saved the beautiful Princess Fiona from the clutches of a randy female dragon! This he did to get rid of all the fairytale characters invading his home, but as the film ends the game picks up and his home is disturbed once again as he is labelled 'hero for hire'.

Being the selfish fellow he is, there is, of course, an underlying reason for his helping a plethora of characters across four worlds and 36 missions. That

reason is donkey – the loveable sidekick who just can't stop talking. You see, donkey has been imprisoned in a magic mirror and Shrek needs to perform good deeds to get the mirror under his control. Hey, we're sure this tale will turn into an award-winning narrative by the time the game goes on sale!

If you can forget about the story for the moment and check out these wonderful images, you'll see that this game looks superb. The character

models in particular are incredibly well-designed and when you see them moving it's just like watching the film in action – only this time you get to control the fate of the on-screen green machine!

To satisfy those who love the Hollywood blockbuster you'll find a selection of sublime-looking cut-scenes which play out in real-time before each mission. These are littered with the sarcastic adult humour of the film, providing a nice warm up for a game that allows you to let rip out of your ass for a main weapon! Now if that doesn't make for entertaining play then nothing can – after all, Shrek does appeal to the British sense of humour. ●

COUNTING SHEEP

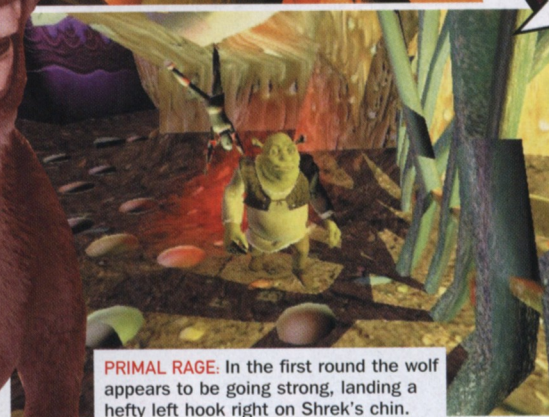
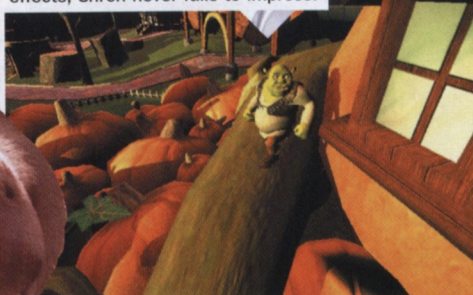
WHEN YOU'RE A LOCAL HERO THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A DAY OFF!

Each one of the 36 missions in the game is presented in storybook form. Unfortunately, this 'find the sheep' black bag operation fails to inform you that there's a wolf lurking around who would like nothing better than to see the sheep in his larder. The moral of the story – it's never easy being a hero.



BIG, BAD WOLF: You'd better start swotting up on your fairytales if you want to do well in this game!

WONDERLAND: Full of rich, vibrant colours and cool lighting effects, Shrek never fails to impress.



PRIMAL RAGE: In the first round the wolf appears to be going strong, landing a hefty left hook right on Shrek's chin.



WHAT IF...

...Shrek were a modern day hero? If Superman were to rescue a damsel in distress – no worries. But a massive, ugly, green ogre? Odds are you'd run back into the burning flames!



EGGHEAD: With an egg that size you could make an omelette for an army!



1ST OPINION

THE MOVIE COMES TO LIFE!

Translating big movie names into videogames is always a licence to print money. It usually doesn't matter how bad the game is, if the name is big enough it will sell. Luckily, though, this doesn't seem to be the case with *Shrek*. A lot of time and effort has gone into this game, rather than banging out a generic platform title. Of course, the worry is always still there, which means this could go one of two ways. Picture it as an onion – the only question is whether it's the donkey kind (smelly and makes people cry) or the Shrek kind (full of layers)?

SUMMARY: Intriguing gameplay – can't wait!

INFORMATION

Publisher..... Microsoft
Developer..... Blitz Games
Genre..... Party
Estimated Release..... 14 March
Players..... 1-4
Weblink..... [www.xbox.com/
games/strategy/fuzion-
frenzy.htm](http://www.xbox.com/games/strategy/fuzion-frenzy.htm)



WORDS: MIKE O'SULLIVAN

TOTAL GAMES .net XBIM

XBOX TOTAL GAMES .NET

There's only one Web site worth visiting for everything Xbox - TotalGames.net.

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS SCREENSAVER
WALLPAPER MOVIES

FUZION FRENZY

WHAT IF...

...the game included the chance to play online in the final version? Four players on one machine would be fun, but Internet play would make an even more welcome addition.

MAKE YOUR PARTY GO WITH A SWING

The success of the excellent *Mario Party* on the Nintendo 64 showed that the idea of 'party games' worked incredibly well on consoles. The range of simplistic mini-games linked

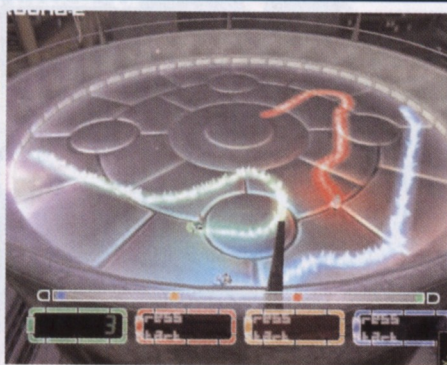
together into a series of multiplayer challenges created one of the platform's most addictive and successful titles. Now, Blitz Games is planning to bring the concept to the Xbox with *Fuzion Frenzy*, a game composed of 48 different mini-games, all of which are playable with up to four players at the same time.

Unlike many of the games we are expecting to see unleashed in the coming months, there is nothing particularly revolutionary about *Fuzion Frenzy*. This is a title based around good old-fashioned gameplay - pure and simple fun. That's not to say that no effort has gone into making the game look rather stunning, though. Each of the mini-games we have seen looks most impressive, and by

PARTY TIME!

THE MOST FUN YOU CAN HAVE WITH THREE FRIENDS?

The concept of the party game is by no means unique to the Xbox. *Mario Party* on the Nintendo 64 paved the way, with *Crash Bash* on the PlayStation taking up the challenge of providing simple four-player fun. Launching such a title for the Xbox shows that Microsoft feels it has been missing out on that section of the market that just wants something to play after a few pints!



NHL HITZ 2002

HOCKEY: A GREAT EXCUSE FOR A FIGHT!

INFORMATION

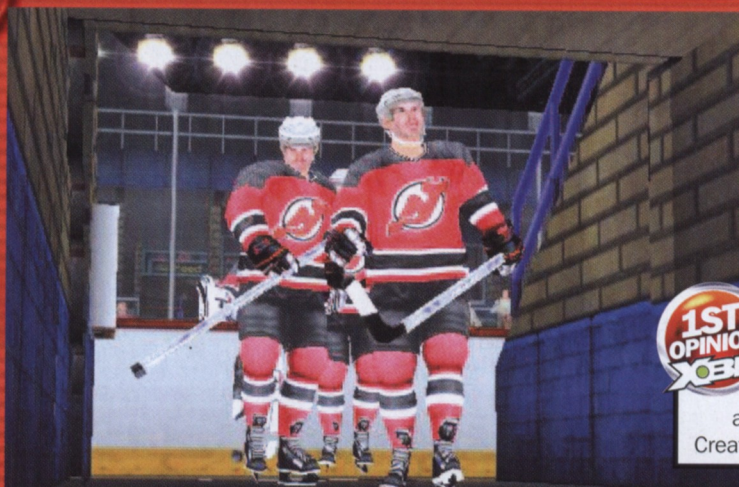
Publisher..... Midway
Developer..... Black Box
Genre..... Sports
Estimated Release..... Spring
Players..... 1-6
Weblink..... [www.nhlhitz.
midway.com](http://www.nhlhitz.midway.com)



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

Midway has released NHL games on a variety of formats, but the new Xbox incarnation has given the arcade-style formula a good going over, while preserving the classic sense of fun. This is a hockey experience you won't forget.

Additions include full 3D crowds that react to the action (they'll even walk out!), ice that deforms and scratches through play, in-game facial expressions, pucks that catch fire and glass that shatters as you strut your stuff - and this is just the tip of the iceberg. This game looks set to become the definitive hockey hustle.



1ST OPINION XBIM

JOLLY HOCKEY STICKS

Previous Midway hockey outings have been a great laugh, and there are lots of new additions here, along with the usual mini-games, Create-A-Player and On Fire mode.

1ST
OPINION
XBOXPARTY
GAME
MAYHEM!

Whilst it hardly pushes the Xbox technology to its limits, *Fuzion Frenzy* is likely to appeal to a very wide audience and with the simple format of the games, it could become a post-pub favourite. Hopefully, online options will be included to make this even better value for money – if so, it could go on to become a classic.



Have a few pints – then play away!

ON XBOX!

marrying the next-generation visuals with solid and enjoyable games, Blitz could have a surprise hit on its hands when this is released.

The only aspect that seems set to throw a potential spanner in the works is the possible lack of Internet play – four players can play on one console, but with the Xbox's much-vaunted online capabilities, this would seem a natural selection for online play. No official announcement has been made yet, which probably does not bode well – you can rely on XBM to bring you news of any developments on that front just as soon as they happen. ●

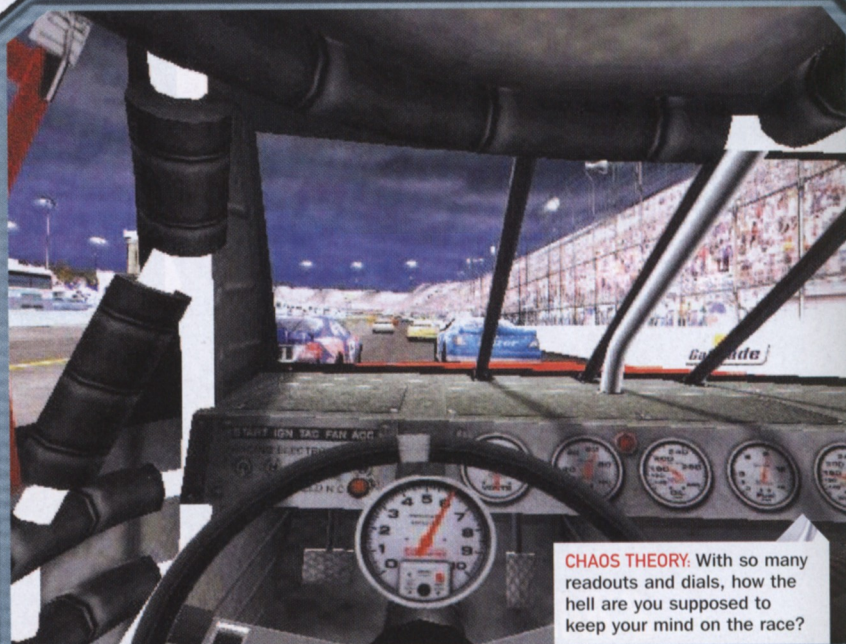


KING OF THE WORLD: Either they're putting on a dance or the LA team are celebrating a victory.

DUCK'S ASS. Unlike football, hockey requires an amazing amount of precision to get the puck into the goal.



"ADDITIONS INCLUDE FULL 3D CROWDS THAT REACT TO THE ACTION"



CHAOS THEORY: With so many readouts and dials, how the hell are you supposed to keep your mind on the race?

NASCAR HEAT 2002

TIME TO TURN UP THE TEMPERATURE!

INFORMATION

Publisher..... Infogrames
Developer..... Monster Games
Genre..... Racing
Estimated Release..... Summer
Players..... 1-32
Weblink..... us.infogrames.com/nascarheat



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

Confusing as it may be to us, the Americans love the idea of racing around a circle for hours on end. Now, it may never quite gain the same level of interest in old Blighty, but there are plenty of fans eager to get a hold of games like *NASCAR Heat 2002*.

As boring as they may sound, NASCAR games are quite alluring – if only for that fact that crashes are pretty much a dead cert! However, if you are intent on taking the race seriously then you'll find there is a surprising amount of tactical play involved. This is going to make for a superb online multiplayer game. ●

1ST
OPINION
XBOX

FAST AND FURIOUS!

It may not be to everyone's taste but *NASCAR Heat 2002* is going to be one of those games that you find yourself coming back to over and over again. Besides, it makes a difference from the usual slew of generic racers that consoles usually get lumbered with!



"AS BORING AS THEY MAY SOUND, NASCAR GAMES ARE QUITE ALLURING"

THE FORCE WITH YOU



WE WILL BE ALWAYS...

YODA STORIES, YODA CHALLENGE, X-WING VS TIE FIGHTER, X-WING ALLIANCE, SUPER BOMBAD RACING, SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE, REBEL ASSAULT, STAR WARS ARCADE, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK ARCADE, RETURN OF THE JEDI ARCADE, ARCADE TRILOGY, PODRACER, PIT DROIDS, JEDI KNIGHT, JAR JAR'S JOURNEY, GUNGAN FRONTIER, FORCE COMMANDER, RACER, PHANTOM MENACE, DROIDWORKS, CHESS, ANAKIN'S SPEEDWAY, STARFIGHTER, JEDI POWER BATTLES, SUPER RETURN OF THE JEDI, DEMOLITION, MASTERS OF TERAS KASI, THE PHANTOM MENACE, ROGUE SQUADRON, OBI-WAN'S ADVENTURES. WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE...



It's been 24 years since the audience left Mann's Chinese Theatre with a big collective smile slapped across their

mushes; they'd just witnessed *Star Wars: A New Hope*, the film that would change the course of movies forever. Ever since that fateful day the Lucas machine hasn't stopped rolling, not that we're moaning since life without *Star Wars* is no life at all.

No wookies, no Han, no Lando, no blonde blokes in pyjamas wielding metre-long glow sticks and no Boba Fett. No THX sound, no Industrial Light and Magic, no scam artists on ebay charging £11.20 for Atari 2600 versions of *The Empire Strikes Back* and no drunken students trying Jedi mind tricks on bouncers. And most importantly, none of the source material that is so perfect for expansion in the ever-growing arena of videogames.

In 1982 the arcade coin-op of *Star Wars* was the first ever machine to use sampled speech; speech that had been taken from the actual movie. Too cool for words and a game that still plays well to this day.

Ever since then, *Star Wars*-related games have spread to a variety of computers and consoles with all the mixed successes of a thousand Imperial Probe Droids. High points include the brilliant *X-Wing* series and *Jedi Knight* on the PC, the low points being any Force-related game to crawl its way as far as the PSone. And yes *Star Wars: Episode One*, we do mean you!

At a press event earlier this year LucasArts admitted they'd let the quality of *Star Wars* games slip and were now ready to get a tighter grip on the world's best game license. And what do you know, they backed up this promise with a look at the Xbox-only *Obi-Wan* and a fresh rethinking of the PlayStation 2 hit, *Starfighter*...



INFORMATION

Publisher Activision
Developer LucasArts
Genre Adventure
Release May
Players 1
Weblink www.lucasarts.com/products/obiwan/



WORDS: WILL JOHNSTON

TOTAL GAMES .net XBOX

XBOX TOTALGAMES.NET

Need more pictures of this LucasArts gem? Look no further...

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES



DEFLECTION: The straighter on you face a foe, the higher the chance that you will automatically deflect the shot.

STAR WARS OBI-WAN

ALWAYS TWO THERE ARE... NO MORE... NO LESS. A MASTER AND AN APPRENTICE

WHAT IF...

...you hear a voice, "Oyi, mooie-mooie! I luv yous!" You spin round and in one move you extend your sabre and cut and replace it beneath your robe as Jar Jar Binks head rolls across the floor?



Those of us not blessed with a midi-chlorian count that's way off the chart and a Jedi trailer-trash buzz-cut will be happy to learn the mysterious ways of this latest Force-'em-up, for surely it surrounds and binds us.

No geek prizes for those who have already rightly guessed that *Obi-Wan* puts you in the towelling togs of none other

than Obi-Wan McGregor as you make your way through scenes that lead up to and through the events of *Episode One*.

Despite what the stern faces of Qui-Gon and Mace Windu may tell you, being a Jedi Knight is fun. In *Obi-Wan* see fun you will, for your allie the Force it is, and a powerful allie it is too. You see, the game's emphasis is on existing in a more civilised time where light sabres were definitely a lot less clumsy than a blaster.

Not surprisingly odd then to learn that *Obi-Wan*'s combat will be mostly based on the use of a Jedi's emblematic weapon of choice, with which you can slice through mostly any object (except another sabre) and even deflect incoming blaster shots. Wee Obi's deftness with the weapon, as well as his way with the living Force, is set to be the game's biggest draw since it has

been paid a level of attention never seen in a game before. The dull hum of the weapon will be conveyed through the vibration function of the controller while you can hit specific parts of enemies. Slice off a droid's arm and it won't be able to shoot its gun, perform an overhead slash and you'll carve right through it as each section divides and crashes to the floor. Fans of *The Matrix* will drip when they hear that there is even a slow-mo/Bullet-Time function that allows you to play a particularly impressive move at a pace that shows off all the grace.

And then there's the fact that this game follows the moves shown in *Episode One* and not the rather robotic manoeuvres of the holy trilogy. Integration is the keyword here, where kicks, somersaults and cartwheels are blended with swordplay and

Force moves. Yep, you'll have access to Force pulls and pushes, Force jumps and even the ability to throw your weapon with guidance from the Force.

With all these tricks on offer it's good to learn that you'll have a wide variety of enemies available with which you can try them out. You get to train with fellow Jedi Adi Gallia, Plo Koon and Mace Windu, you get to molest Tusken Raiders and fight Darth Maul. And all in environments so detailed that they even give away glimpses of characters and locations that you'll see next when *Episode Two* beams onto theatre screens next year.

Obi-Wan will undoubtedly be a must-have release for fans, but it is good to see that those who couldn't tell the odds in successfully navigating an asteroid field are in for a treat too.



IN CLOSE-UP

Don't let the fuzz or an other intergalactic peace keeper tell you any different – stealing is fine when you're with the Force.

IN CLOSE-UP

No doubt you already know a blaster to be a clumsy weapon. Obi-Wan has seen the light and you can probably guess where this is going next?

IN CLOSE-UP

Like beer and wine, droids and light sabres just don't mix. The Jawas would have a field day if they followed you around for an afternoon. Oo-teenii!

USE THE FORCE: We can't remember the Force being quite so sparkly, oh well.

SABRE SWIPE: Killing robotic kangaroo-men has never been so worthwhile.

REMATCH!

LET US SETTLE THIS!

Han Solo killed the bounty hunter Greedo by shooting him first. We know this – we saw it. And then in comes the hand of Lucas and changes or “re-masters” the scene. Pah! Take your vengeance for this crime against credulity with Obi-Wan and slice up anyone who even has a passing resemblance to the little green bugga. Yes, we know it's a very tenuous link – any excuse to moan about the whole Han/Greedo thing and we will do it.



1ST
OPINION
XBOX

USING THE
XBOX
FORCE!

Looks like this one's going to be a combination of Jedi Power Battles, Star Wars Episode One and Jedi Knight which, despite the first two games being below average, is a very good thing. Obi-Wan was originally developed for the PC, but has now become an Xbox exclusive and we can speculate either way as to why this has happened. Hopefully LucasArts will spend a lot of development time getting the control right since the ability to perform so many actions will be pointless if we just get a crude estimation of a PC keyboard set-up.

SUMMARY: Looks good, but we'll wait and see!

“YOU CAN SLICE THROUGH MOSTLY ANY OBJECT (EXCEPT ANOTHER SABRE) AND EVEN DEFLECT INCOMING BLASTER SHOTS”



INFORMATION

Publisher Activision
Developer LucasArts
Genre Shooting
Release May
Players 1-2
Weblink www.lucasarts.com/products/starfighter

**STAR WARS
STARFIGHTER
SPECIAL EDITION**

WORDS: WILL JOHNSTON

**TOTAL
GAMES
net** **XBOX**

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

You'll find even more on this Star Wars classic over on TotalGames.net!

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES



STAR WARS STARFIGHTER: SPECIAL EDITION



GREAT SHOT KID, THAT WAS ONE IN A MILLION!



WHAT IF...

...there was a mode where X-Wing Fighters take on Naboo Starfighters. Or if all the *Episode One* ships were entirely replaced with a full 1977 battle fleet, come to think of it.



Having already played the cut-down version of *Starfighter* on the PS2 we're already fully aware that it does what no-one thought possible. It makes piloting one of these new (yet old, if you get what we're saying) ships well worth the effort. Hey, this is *Star Wars* territory we're in, so it's

hard not to get personal. Still, while George is busy annihilating the childhood of the world's twenty-somethings with *Episode One* and *Two*, no game will be released that is based purely on the original film's universe.

So here we sit at pains to admit that *Starfighter SE* is looking mighty appetising, even to those for whom the appearance of Jar Jar Binks during the final year of the millennium was just another sign that the end of the world was indeed nigh.

Taking the role of one of three available pilots you've the unenviable task of taking out the Trade Federation, and not by diplomatic options either. Combat will take place over land, low orbit and the space around three worlds where missions aren't

just a case of kill 'em all – there's structure. A structure that sees each mission divided into objectives that will be familiar to fans of the excellent yet ageing *X-Wing/TIE Fighter* games on the PC. Provide escort, destroy specific capital ships, scouting and dogfighting missions will all be there, but this time with a nice and shiny Xbox polish. Visuals aren't the only thing to get a makeover either. We've got five new bonus missions to look forward to as well as an improved two-payer mode.

Any game that greets a press of a button with a crystal clear and genuine *Star Wars* sound effect is automatically going to bring a tear to our eye. But often is the case that once the salt water dries up we're left just crying at another missed opportunity (Yoda

Stories and Battles and Masters of Teras Kasi) where it all looks like *Star Wars*, sounds like *Star Wars* but plays like a dead dog that's connected to a car battery. *Starfighter* will be different and is definitely the game that we're looking for. ●



SCARAN ATTACK: That'll be shields at full then!

ASTEROIDS DO NOT CONCERN ME, GENERAL

Possibly the greatest film-to-arcade cross over, the original Atari *Star Wars* arcade machine is definitely something to look out for. Simple yet effective wire-frame graphics gave the game the look of an X-Wing battle computer display, while the simple structure allowed players to play through the three levels again and again, knocking up momentous scores en route.

Aim your lasers at a TIE Fighter or an incoming fireball and shoot... enter the Deathstar's trench and avoid walkways... and shoot TIE Fighters and fireballs... and then shoot the exhaust port. Then do it again, but this time you get to fly over the Imperial battle station first. Repeat until you can't take any more!

A brilliant game and one that with a few minor alterations went on to become *The Empire Strikes Back*. Too bad for Empire that fending off AT-ATs, shooting probe droids and navigating through asteroid fields just wasn't as awe-inspiring as blowing up Vader's crib with the help of a Force-fed proton torpedo.

By the time Return of the Jedi hit the seafarers in 1984 an isometric view had been adopted where you controlled Speeder bikes, AT-STs and the Millennium Falcon through key scenes from the movie. It worked in a ho-hum kind of way, but mostly just made you want another experience like the first time you played *Star Wars*. Enough of this reminiscing – what of the future?



"STARFIGHTER WILL BE DIFFERENT AND IS DEFINITELY THE GAME THAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR"



NABOO TO YOU! The game will truly come alive if you imagine Jar Jar piloting every enemy fighter.



ACTION IN RAVINES: Why, it's just like Beggar's Canyon back home!

FLYING PICKETS

SCAB! SCAB! SCAB!

For reasons bet known to science *Starfighter* plays best when your dogfighting in space. This bizarre phenomenon has been with us in various games, from *Wing Commander IV* to *Colony Wars II* and it still confuses – so what can be done? Hopefully the Xbox version will have a slightly more polished ground-attack mechanic so flying at high speeds at low level feels just like the movies say it should.



LOW FLYER: Much of the game's landscapes were based on North Wales.



1ST OPINION
XBOX

A WELCOME ADDITION

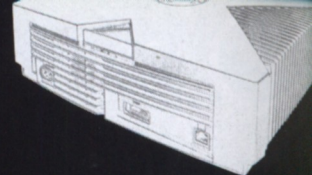
Starting with where the PlayStation 2 left off is no bad thing since *Starfighter* was an excellent game and it's sure to play the same on Xbox. But, of course, this time around things have been spruced up and the rather pitiful two-player mode has been given a severe swipec with a programming version of a hydrosprayer. With the chances in place and a deeper, more textured look to the game's universe, we should be in for a rare treat – a *Star Wars* game that is both respectful to the films, fans and those who just like a damned good game.

SUMMARY: *Star Wars* fans are going to go rejoice!

5 XBOXs
TO WIN!
XBOX



XBM



WIN AN XBOX!

FIVE LUCKY READERS ARE GOING TO WALK AWAY WITH A BRAND-NEW XBOX CONSOLE ON DAY ONE – IT COULD BE YOU!



If you want an Xbox in your hands on day one in the UK you're probably going to have to pre-order, most certainly go down the shops to pick it up and definitely fork out £300! But why bother when you can win one free of charge and have it delivered to your doorstep?

Just think, with all the money you will save by winning this competition you could pick up a selection of games and DVDs instead! Or, if you're feeling swish, perhaps buy another console so that you've got the option to link them up when the option arises and make your friends greener than an Xbox logo! Whatever you do, you'd be mad not to enter this competition. Just look at it calling to you – it needs a loving home, and all you have to do is answer this simple question...

WHERE DID MICROSOFT HOLD ITS EUROPEAN LAUNCH EVENT?

- A. CAIRO
- B. CANNES
- C. SEATTLE

To enter the competition simply dial **0906 781 2555** and follow the foolproof instructions. Remember to leave your name and address.

The phone call will last no longer than three mins and is charged at £1.00 per minute. Please ask the permission of the person who pays the bill before calling. The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or any companies related to this competition may not enter. There is no cash alternative. The closing date for entries is 3 January 2002.

INFORMATION

Publisher Microsoft
Developer Adrenium Games
Genre Adventure
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1
Weblink www.adrenium.com



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

TOTAL GAMES .net XBIM

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

More great screenshots of the game can be found on the Web site.

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS WALLPAPER
SCREENSAVER MOVIES

IN CLOSE-UP

The creatures you get to battle look absolutely superb. There is a real sense of dread when you go up against some of the bigger ones.



IN CLOSE-UP

The real-time lighting effects in this game make you want to drop to your knees and thank the heavens for the very existence of the Xbox.



ICE MAN

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS ONLY BRUTE FORCE WILL DO...

There are quite a few puzzles to tax your brain in this game but every so often you're given the chance to rest the old grey matter. For example, here you enter a room where something is frozen in ice - time to investigate your Sharon Stone side and start chipping away.



AZURIK: RISE OF PERATHIA

A VERY SILLY NAME FOR A NOT SO SILLY GAME!

WHAT IF...

...this game had a sensible name? Let's face it, it's hardly like this rolls off the tongue! In our day games were called things like *Wrath Of Azurik* or *Death Stalker*!



Most people have it fairly easy in life. They go into work nine till five, go home and watch some telly before taking a nap. If, on the other hand, your name is Azurik and you're living in Perathia, you have the slightly more involving job of having to prevent an impending apocalypse.

Playing the unfortunate chap in this massive adventure, you're assigned the task of protecting the sacred elements of fire, earth, water and air. Failure to do so results in the end of the world - no pressure then! The emphasis is fixed firmly on the action side of things, although there are plenty of story and adventure elements included to ensure you don't get bored.

Not that you would get bored with this game. In fact, it's fun to just sit there and watch it all moving. The environments featured are just immense and each section has been themed around the four different sacred elements, giving your eyeballs a show you're never likely to forget. The lighting and particle effects in particular are guaranteed to send a warm, tingly feeling all over your body.

Of course, a nice-looking world is nothing without something to populate it, and Azurik has an incredibly advanced AI system. The enemies in this game work together when needed, flock across the landscapes and even ride one another to gain a tactical advantage! ●



GREAT LIGHTING EFFECTS!

A quick glance across this page should confirm how great this game looks but the proof is in the pudding and developer Adrenium Games is very confident indeed. From what we've seen so far it has every reason to be! The huge world this game offers should be a joy to explore and, best of all, with no loading times whatsoever. Some cunning use of the hard drive perhaps?



SUMMARY: Blue blokes? Hmm... whatever!



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Who needs that when we've got this?



WAVE RACE

BLUE STORM REVIEWED

The greatest racing game ever just got wetter!



PIKMIN

EXCLUSIVE! Could this be even bigger than Pokémon?



SOUL CALIBUR 2

En garde! Fancy a poke?



FREE VIDEO!

THIS ISSUE



LUIGI'S MANSION

EXCLUSIVE! Nintendo puts the freshness back!



RESIDENT EVIL

EXCLUSIVE! Scariest than a night with the in-laws?

STARFOX ADVENTURES

EXCLUSIVE! Can Rare beat Zelda at its own game?

SUPER MONKEY BALL

EXCLUSIVE! More fun than a bag-load of chimps?

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INFORMATION

Publisher.....Electronic Arts
Developer.....Radical Entertainment
Genre.....Racing
Estimated Release.....14 March
Players.....1-2
Weblink.....www.simpsonsroadrage.com



WORDS: JEM ROBERTS

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IN CLOSE-UP

Woo-hoo! Here's the cash you've earned... just like in *Crazy Taxi* you can pick up passengers who will pay you if they reach their destination in one piece.

IN CLOSE-UP

Always handy to keep the virtual Springfield map around you. You can find your way by following the magic hand, but the map is pretty useful too!

SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

PLAY TAXI DRIVER OR CRUISE ON YOUR OWN – IT'S ALL THE RAGE!

WHAT IF...

...there was a cheat which allowed you to complete tasks as characters from Matt Groening's latest laugh-a-thon, *Futurama*? We'd give anything to see Bender behind the wheel!

T

he clouds part in a blue sky and a choir of voices chime together as the shaking title drifts onto the screen. You know immediately what we're dealing with here, and even though the world's favourite family has had mixed success in the videogame world (to say the least!) there are going to be plenty of massive laughs in store for you with this game. This is The Simpsons, after all.

Those of you who have been dismally disappointed by practically every past attempt to feature the yellow-skinned brood in their own videogame adventure can breath a sigh of relief. There are plenty of possible complaints people may wish to level at *Simpsons Road Rage*, but there's no denying it'll be damn funny and, of course, properly challenging for a change – although this may be more due to the obvious similarity to recent racing success

Crazy Taxi. The undeniable similarities between the two games are well-known, but what about the differences? What makes Homer's mad dashes to get across Springfield more than just *Crazy Taxi* with a Matt Groening skin? Well, not a lot really, but you do get a two-player mode and a 'knocking-things-over' challenge, which is more than you can say for the original game. The basic challenge is to take the citizens of Springfield to their desired destination in as little time as possible, and always be on the look out for the next fare. Okay, so this doesn't make a tenth of the sense that it does in *Crazy Taxi*, but you just have to let that go. Apart from the ►

"YOU CAN CERTAINLY EXPECT A LOT MORE FOR YOUR CASH THAN THE OCCASIONAL 'D'OH!'"

Follow the yellow hand – it will point you in the direction that your fare wants to go. It points to the next junction, though, rather than as the crow flies.

KRAZY KRUSTY: Yeah, like a huge star of Krusty's standing is gonna offer groundskeeper Willy a lift!

CAN'T GET ENOUGH: Just as unlikely is the thought of Homer driving through a Duff brewery without stopping.

OH MY GOD! Yet another unlikely scene! Ned Flanders ripping up the front lawn of the church?

CLOWNING AROUND: Dan Castellaneta's got his work cut out for him with Krusty and Homer together!

IT'S-A HIM! MARIO!

VIDEOGAME STARS IN SIMPSONS CAMEO

The Simpsons may have had a chequered past in the videogame world over the years, but that hasn't stopped them taking the mick out of the videogames industry as well. In *Marge Be Not Proud* (which is probably on BBC 2 this week for the fiftieth time) Bart gets busted for nicking a crucial videogame cart, thanks to a little advice from some moustachioed plumber and a blue hedgehog...



"EVERY LAST LANDMARK YOU KNOW FROM THE SERIES IS IN PLACE, WHIZZING BY AS YOU MAKE YOUR WAY FROM CHECKPOINT TO CHECKPOINT"



WHO LET THESE PEOPLE BEHIND A WHEEL?

EIGHTEEN DIFFERENT DRIVERS TO CHOOSE FROM – AND NONE OF THEM WITH A CLEAN LICENCE...

There are some scary character choices awaiting you for two-player mayhem. Fancy a spin as town alcoholic Barney Gumble? Or a blast in Bart's surreal spaceship? Marge, Krusty, Flanders, even Lisa get a go behind the wheel, in vehicles ranging from Lisa's pedal car to Krusty's old piece of junk! There are even two different Homers to choose from – regular and Mr Plow... so there's one two-player game that'll confuse everybody.



► main challenge, there are also some rather cool options such as Sunday Driver, which lets you explore the town with ease, a Mission mode, where you must complete some crazy tasks, and plenty of bonus secrets to find.

Anyway, it shouldn't matter all that much whether you think this is going to be just a Simpsons hack of the existing game or not – the main point is, it's hilarious! The regular cast of the show (Dan Castellaneta, Nancy Cartwright, Hank Azaria *et al*) have all recorded hundreds of brand-new phrases, gags and cross-talks for the 30-plus characters that crop up asking for a lift. You can certainly expect a lot more for

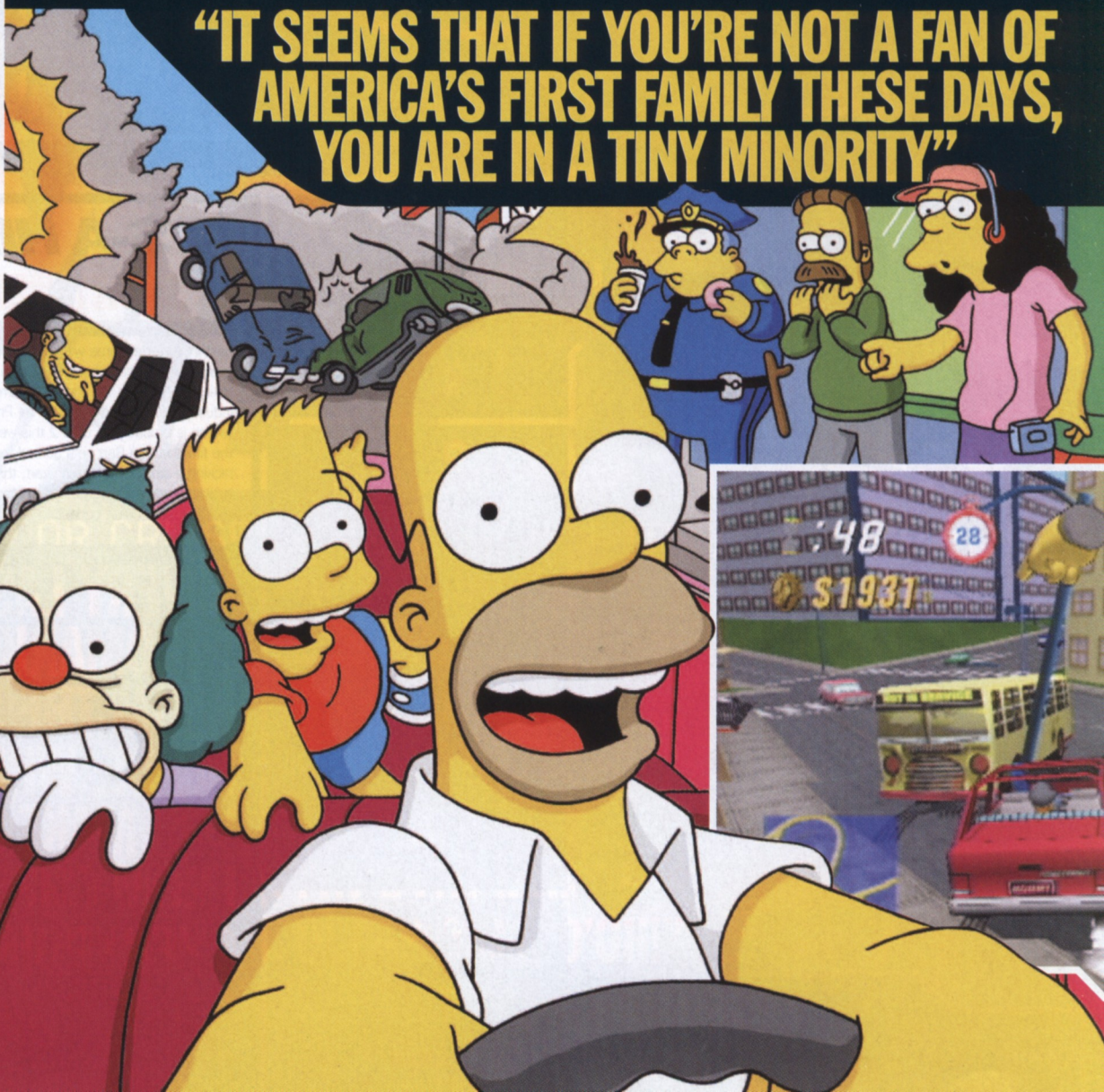
your cash than the occasional 'D'oh!' or 'Ay bleedin' carumba' as you career round the corners looking for the next fare (don't worry about the plot – Mr Burns has privatised public transport or something). Inevitably, after the hundredth game there's going to be a bit of repetition, but for anyone with a funny bone to be tickled, the new sketches and sound-bites should be well worth the asking price alone.

You'd be hard pushed to find much to complain about with the graphics either, the way the title's shaping up. The PlayStation2 version was more than enough of a visual treat, and the graphics have been souped up just that extra bit for

the Xbox version. If you remember the *Treehouse of Horror* episode when Homer became 3D after going through a vortex behind the sofa then you'll know what to expect from this new, totally three-dimensional Springfield. Bart, Marge, Lisa, Uncle Barney Gumble and the rest of the cast have been lusciously rounded out for their own top-speed challenges, and the town itself is looking very good in 3D too, with every last landmark you know from the series in place, whizzing by as you make your way from checkpoint to checkpoint.

Good laughs and nice graphics are always to be expected from Simpsons games, but what's usually missing is any

"IT SEEMS THAT IF YOU'RE NOT A FAN OF AMERICA'S FIRST FAMILY THESE DAYS, YOU ARE IN A TINY MINORITY"





"GOOD LAUGHS AND NICE GRAPHICS ARE ALWAYS TO BE EXPECTED FROM SIMPSONS GAMES, BUT WHAT'S USUALLY MISSING IS ANY ACTUAL CHALLENGE"

actual challenge – more than a little important for any kind of sustained interest in playing the game! Luckily, as anyone out there who's already taken on the challenge on the PlayStation2 will know, this is one game you won't have conquered after one afternoon's idle playing. Some of the time challenges border on the impossible, and there are going to be a lot of burned out vehicles before you've been crowned the fastest driver in Springfield. And then, of course, there are the multiplayer games. This is really what titles like *Simpsons Road Rage* are all about, and there's no doubt that this is going to be a major party title when it finally hits the shelves. You and a pal will be able to fight over who gets to play which character, which could get pretty nasty!

The only real problem that *Simpsons Road Rage* may face when it becomes available to buy is the simple fact that it *IS Crazy Taxi*, only made a hundred times more entertaining and addictive due to the fact that it stars some of the most loved cartoon characters of all time. It seems that if you're not a fan of America's first family these days, you are in a tiny minority – and this game will simply be yummied up by Simpsons fans. The only question now is whether there will ever be a totally original Simpsons game that doesn't suck. They've tried and they've failed, and judging by *Simpsons Road Rage*, they've learned the moral – never try. ●



A MUST FOR SIMPSONS FANS!

People are either going to love this game or ignore it. Everyone who's seen it and pointed out the fact that it's just *Crazy Taxi* with a Simpsons skin is pretty much right, but then who cares? This is the best game featuring America's first family to appear in years, so both fans of the show (that's 90 per cent of the population then!) and Xbox owners who need to grasp every title on the shelves will need to play this game over and over – and the two-player option is bound to be a party favourite!

SUMMARY: Highly addictive you'll play it to death!



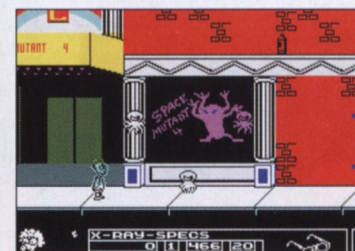
THE YELLOW PERIL

HOMER AND FAMILY HAVE BEEN UBIQUITOUS ON EVERY CONSOLE SINCE THE CARTOON FIRST CAME TO OUR SCREENS. WE OFTEN WISH THEY HADN'T...

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

ACCLAIM, 1990

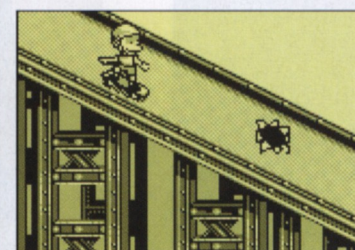
This first videogame outing for Bartholomew J appeared on practically everything: Amiga, C64, SNES, NES, MegaDrive – they all got exactly the same side-scrolling platformer, in which you control Bart as he sprays things red and jumps on innocent people's heads in the name of saving the world from vicious aliens.



BART VS THE JUGGERNAUTS

ACCLAIM, 1992

The Nintendo Game Boy churned out loads of starring vehicles for Bart, from this dull party game (in which you have to earn money doing daft things on live telly with Kent Brockman and Dr Marvin Monroe) to uninvolved platform fodder like *Bart & The Beanstalk*, *Bartman* and an odd sports title, *Itchy & Scratchy in Miniature Golf Madness*.

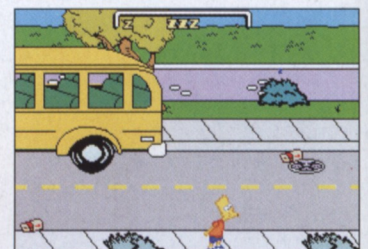


BART'S NIGHTMARE

ACCLAIM, 1992

One of the better Simpsons titles, this odd little party-style game appeared on the SNES and MegaDrive in the early Nineties. In it, Bart is

desperately trying to finish his homework when he nods off. He has to travel through several different challenges, including a Bartzilla scenario, as he tries to find the missing pages of his project and get a good grade.



SIMPSONS WRESTLING

FOX INTERACTIVE, 2001

This 3D beat-'em-up was released earlier this year to almost universal derision, due to the clumsiness of the graphics and the absence of any real game. But that didn't prevent it from being popular – it stuck at number one in the PlayStation charts for yonks!



THE REST

Apart from the classic beat-'em-up arcade game, there have been a ridiculous amount of Matt Groening buffoonery on consoles over the years. *Krusty's Super Fun House* was a notable hit on the NES and Master System, *Virtual Bart* covered a lot of the same ground as *Bart's Nightmare*, but this time with far better graphics, whilst THQ's recent Game Boy Color outing *The Simpsons: Night Of The Living Treehouse Of Doom* was a huge disappointment. At least they've got it right this time!

IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT'S ALWAYS GOING TO BE IN FASHION IT'S THE WORLD OF EXTREME SPORTS. AS SOON AS ONE PHASES OUT A NEW SPORT TAKES ITS PLACE UNTIL EVERYTHING GOES FULL CIRCLE. TRYING TO STAY 'HIP' IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT AND IT SEEMS THE ONLY WAY TO STAY ON TOP OF ALL THE EXTREME JARGON IS TO PICK UP A VIDEOGAME...



here isn't a single gaming enthusiast out there who doesn't dream of becoming an extreme sports professional. The allure of the rock and roll lifestyle, being paid to do something you'd do anyway and sitting back as brand name companies crawl across the floor towards you begging for sponsorship deals.


Well, unfortunately very few of us have what it takes to get to that esteemed level. It's only the elite few that are privileged enough to have a high level of insanity (not to mention balls the size of footballs) allowing them to go large in death-defying situations. Of course, skill plays a big part as well bringing the chances for the average boarder or biker way down. This is where the extreme sports videogame steps up allowing you to fulfil and even surpass your wildest dreams.

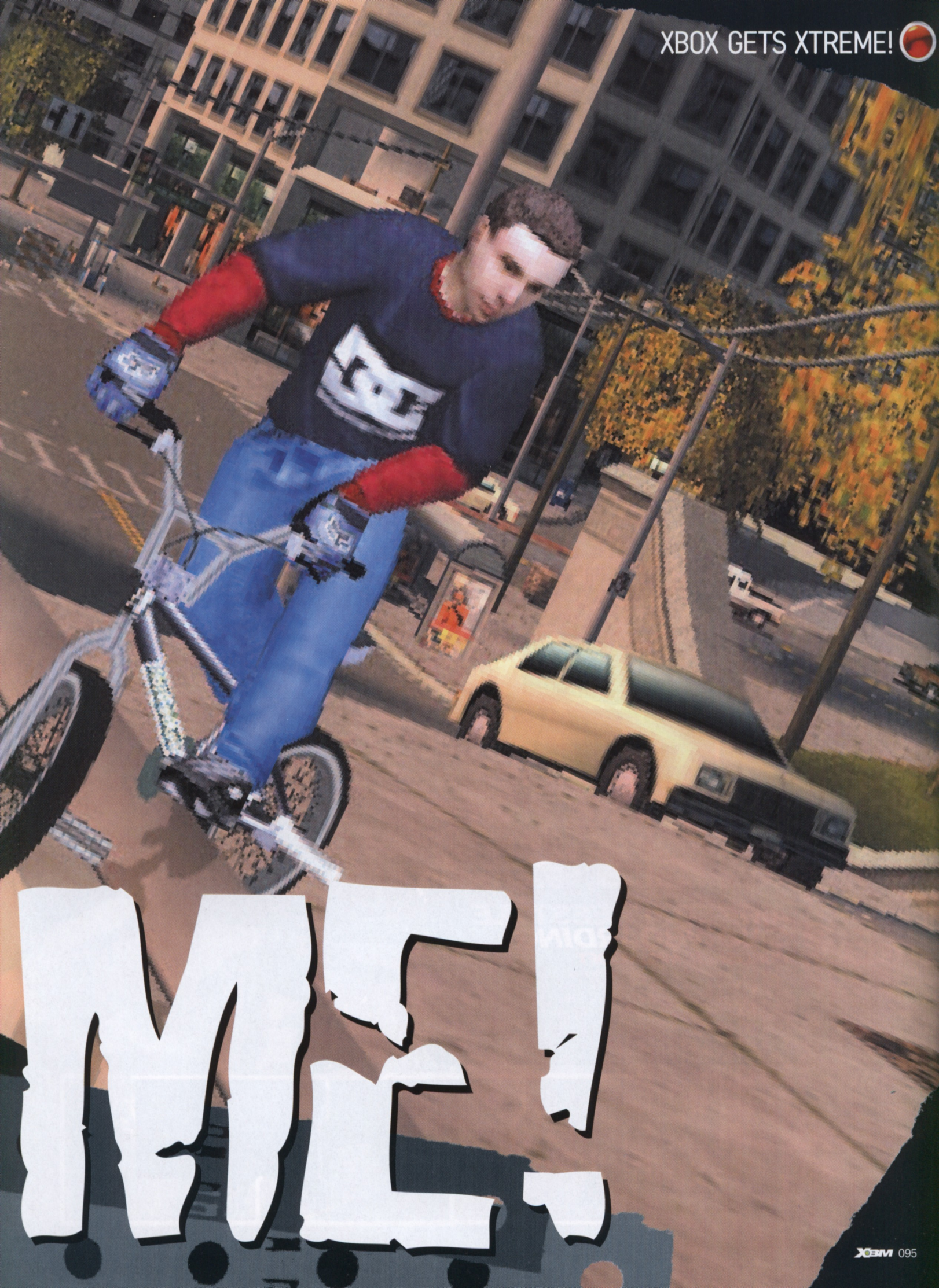
At the moment, developers are sticking to guaranteed successes like skateboarding and snowboarding, but there are some slightly more diverse sports slowly creeping in. A while ago nobody would've dared to try a surfing game, but now there are two on the way! The question is: What happens after this? By the time all of these titles have been released the average Xbox gamer is going to be an adrenalin junkie craving more. Perhaps we'll see some wakeboarding, downhill mountain biking, base jumping or windsurfing games in the not too distant future. For now at least there's plenty to keep you busy. Check out the massive avalanche of titles due out in the coming year...

WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

XBOX GETS

XRTREME

XBOX GETS XTREME! 



ME!

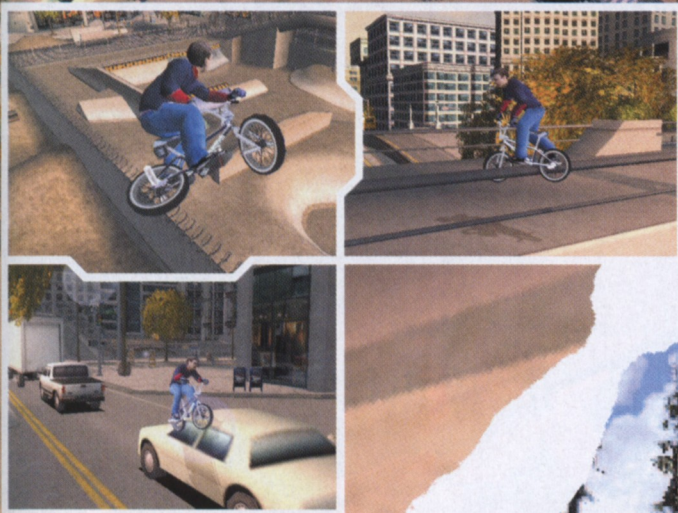
DAVE MIRRA 2

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

When this game first came out on the PSone it was a bit of an outsider. Few people would've believed that it could hold its own against the anticipated Activision title *Matt Hoffman*. But it did – it held its own with a tight grip and refused to let go. The sequel built on this, making it the greatest BMX game ever created.

Smooth controls and an innovative trick linkage system means that you can cruise through the levels not only playing as a pro, but also looking like one. Something you'll never tire of doing because the stages in this game are so damn big and the challenges you have to complete are endless. Like *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3* the levels are also populated with people, cars and other riders – but in this game the other riders will actually do stuff, pulling off tricks when they feel like it.

If you're going to put your money on one BMX riding game then save it for this one. *Dave Mirra 2* was an outstanding game on the PlayStation 2 and with the power of Xbox behind it, this is going to blow you away.



BIKE: STREET, VERT, DIRT GRAVITY GAMES

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY

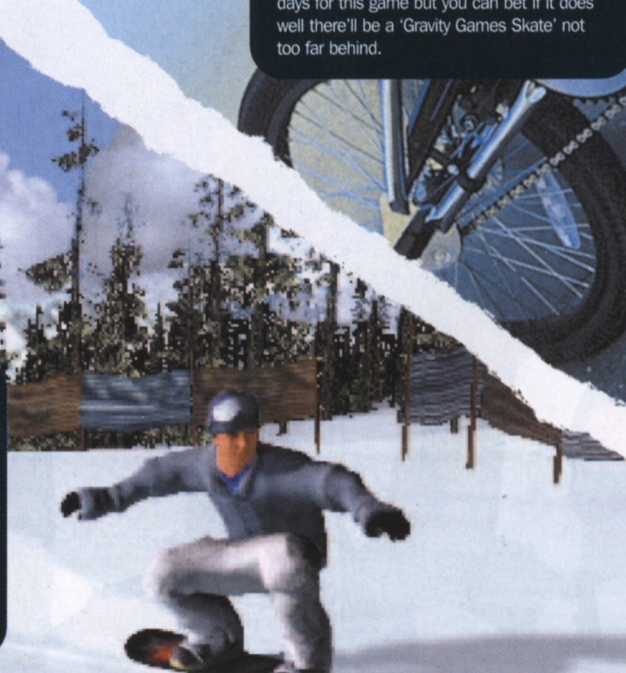
In the world of extreme sports you've got a few events that the elite few beg to be a part of, and the Gravity Games is one of them. Featuring 250 athletes from 17 countries competing in 16 events it is one of the biggest gatherings in the calendar of extreme.

This game concentrates on one aspect of the games – BMX biking. Ride as stars like Dennis McCoy and Jamie Bestwick in an attempt to become the world number one showing off to huge crowds on some mad courses. It's early days for this game but you can bet if it does well there'll be a 'Gravity Games Skate' not too far behind.

AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING

PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT

One of the big launch games, *Amped* just happens to also be one of the greatest snowboard titles ever devised. It pushes the power of the Xbox as much as you're likely to push the riders on the screen – this is exactly the kind of game your console was made for! Don't believe us? Then check out the in-depth three-page preview in this very issue.





TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

PUBLISHER: INFOGAMES



Of all the extreme sports snowboarding makes the most sense as a home game. After all, how many of us can afford to hire all the gear and pay for a holiday to somewhere where there's snow? This Transworld licensed game saves you all the trouble bringing the full-on snowboard experience into your home.

Featuring pros like Andrew Crawford and Peter Line this game lets you ride across 20 huge locations from around the world in a variety of game modes. These include Freestyle, Slope Style, Pipe, Boarder X and Career. Like the rest of the Transworld games there's also going to be a four-player mode so you're never going to feel alone on the mountainside.



SK8

PUBLISHER: RAGE

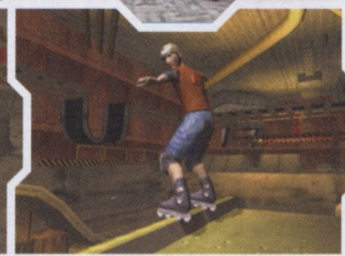


If you can forgive the obscenely cheesy title for a minute then you've got a great skating game to look forward to. We're not talking skateboarding here, by the way.

No sir, this is the proper stuff – aggressive inline skating.

Featuring Fabiola Da Silva and Cesar Mora (world champion pro skaters) this is a highly original extreme sports game with absolutely no competition at all! Suffice to say Rage has found a niche that the public has been begging to be filled – and this game fills it well. The game is still in early stages, but is already delivering the goods.

The level design is already looking cool, allowing for a load of different lines and styles of riding. Skate parks include real locations from around the world as well as a few exotic street environments, and if that isn't enough you can design your own. You can also create your own skater and there are plenty of mind-boggling tricks to pull off and learn. This looks like it could do for inline what Tony Hawk did for skateboards.



FINGERS CROSSED!



Extreme sports publishing god Activision has the license to make Kelly Slater (surfer), Shaun Palmer (snowboarder) and Matt Hoffman (BMX)

games. So if all goes well you should be seeing three more extreme sports titles on the way to the Xbox. That lunatic there, by the way is Shaun, Palmer!

TRANSWORLD SURF

PUBLISHER: INFOGRAVES

Switch on one of the extreme sports channels and odds are you're going to be watching a surfing programme. The wave riding sport has become increasingly popular despite the fact a large proportion of the world's population lives nowhere near the coast.

In this game, developed by Angel Studios, you get to ride waves like a pro in a world of dream tubes. The game boasts cutting edge technology (what game doesn't!) but propaganda aside it does look very nice. The water is obviously a big part of a surfing game and the developer has managed to get this down perfectly. The texture, look and feel of the waves as they roll behind or over you is as authentic as you could hope for.

The game features a Karma meter that changes level as you interact with other surfers, body boarders, photographers, obstacles, dolphins and so on. Getting this up allows you to perform better and ultimately score more points, but let it drop and a shark could attack you! This sounds like an extreme experience to us. Tag this along with the 13 real pros, 10 real locations and real sponsors and you've got a game that is sure to attract fans of the sport.



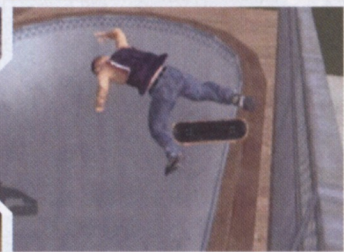
TRANSWORLD SKATEBOARDING

PUBLISHER: INFOGRAVES

Not one to do anything by halves, Infogrames is launching into this extreme sports malarkey at full speed. Joining the surfing and snowboarding titles is *Transworld Skateboarding* and like the other games this is offering an immersive experience.

Featuring full living environments this game requires you to stay out of the way of aggressive drivers and well away from the long arm of the law. You can also expect some security guards and not-so-friendly dogs trying to interrupt your sublime skating skills – skills that include all the signature tricks of the pros.

Of course, the list of officially licensed dream skaters doesn't include Mr Hawk who has his own game, but you do get genius boarders like Bob Burnquist and Brian Anderson. Once you've got your pro chosen it's the usual complete challenge gameplay in some unusually impressive levels. Like *Amped*, this game (and the other *Transworld* titles) allows you to perform for the photographers to fight for a space on magazine covers! Sounds like Tony finally has some worthy competition.



SSX TRICKY

PUBLISHER: EA BIG

Strip it down to its naked roots and this is nothing more than an arcade snowboarder. However, this is incredibly addictive to play and if you pick up the controller you'll find it hard to put it down again!

The controls are as smooth as the visuals and some of the tricks are insanely over the top. In other words exactly what you need for a game like this! A sequel to a PlayStation2 game this includes new courses, new riders, more cool music and a revised trick system that includes the wonderful 'uber' tricks.

Pull off one of these character specific specials and you're on-screen performer spins through the air like a bird shot out of the sky. Sure none of these tricks would be possible in real life, but since when has real life been fun? Adrenalin rushes don't get much better than this!





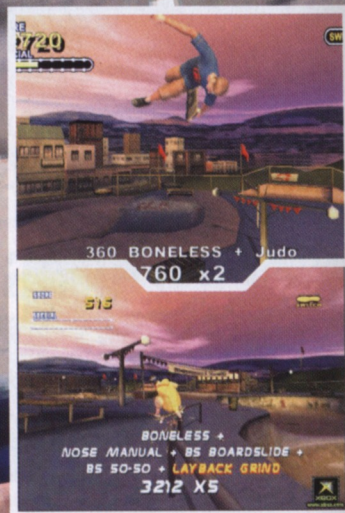
DARK SUMMIT

PUBLISHER: THQ

Proof that something original can be done with a snowboard game comes from THQ and the aptly named developer Radical Entertainment. This in your face extreme snowboarding title called *Dark Summit* is going to take you places that you probably thought never even existed!

Most snowboarding games give you a board, a few riders, and a big mountain to throw them down in a race or competition setting. This isn't what you get in *Dark Summit*. Oh no, a one-of-a-kind game, this is mission-based with an in-depth character-led story. The game takes place on the fictional Mount Garrick where the resident ranger Chief O'Leary has limited access to the slopes.

It's your job to find out what he's hiding and reclaim the mountain for the boarding community whilst battling through a grand total of 45 challenges. Of course, if you have to pull off a few tricks along the way then so be it! An interesting idea that we can't wait to see in action.



TONY HAWK'S

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

If we were to be honest then this is the game that started the entire extreme sports craze. Who would've thought that the original *Tony Hawk's* game would've done so well! Now many regard it as one of the best games on PSone, and the budding skaters are screaming for more.

Unfortunately they don't appear to be shouting loudly enough because *Tony Hawk's 2X* is being given a US-only release! Combining the entire set of levels from the first two games with loads of new stuff sounds like a sure fire hit to us, but for some strange reason it was never meant to be. Instead it looks like us British skaters have got to put up with *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3* – oh, the tragedy!

The biggest and most ambitious of all the *Hawk* titles to date this has a trick list the size of which you cannot imagine. Not to mention loads of cool fully interactive new levels and an insane level of animation. We'll have more on this game soon as well as a confirmation as to whether or not it will launch with the machine in March.



THE FINAL TRICK

We think you'll agree that there's plenty to keep the adrenaline pumping through your body on the Xbox – and this is only the beginning. Just think about it these are only the games that have been announced so far and they are all due out before the end of the coming year. Add another year to that and you'll be able to build a vert ramp out of the game boxes!

INFORMATION

Publisher Infogrames
Developer In-house
Genre Puzzle
Estimated Release Winter 2002
Players 1-4
Weblink www.xbox.com/Games/fighting/loonsff.htm

LOONS
THE FIGHT FOR FAME

WORDS: MIKE O'SULLIVAN

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EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES



LOONS

THE FIGHT FOR FAME

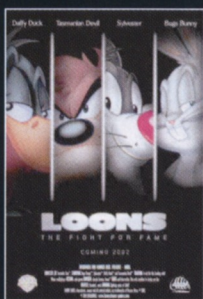
WHAT IF...

...there were more characters? Although the game promises us four to play, with Yosemite Sam directing events, it would be nice to see a few more Looney Tunes characters involved.

OLD-AGE PENSIONERS

YOU MIGHT THINK THAT YOU HAVE TO BE YOUNG AND HIP TO CUT IT IN VIDEOGAMING. THINK AGAIN...

The Warner Bros cartoons are amongst the most popular ever made, and the characters that we all know and love have proved incredibly hard-wearing. Daffy Duck made his WB debut way back in 1937, with Bugs Bunny following (along with his arch-rival Elmer Fudd) in 1940. Yosemite Sam (who directs the action in the game) arrived in 1945, along with Sylvester the cat – who also starred in Tweety Pie, the 1947 cartoon which won Warner Bros their first Academy Award.



LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION! WE LOOK AT INFOGRAMES' LATEST ESCAPADE.

Due for release close to the Xbox launch next year, Loons is an intriguing Looney Tunes game that is part beat-'em-up, part puzzle game, all fun.

Starring Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Sylvester and the Tasmanian Devil, the game invites the characters to 'fight for fame' against each other in a bid to impress Yosemite Sam. The aim of it all is to become the undisputed number-one star, and players will be able to use some classic ACME props (including custard pies, falling anvils and instant storms) to make themselves the star of the show. The backdrop for all

this is a series of interactive movie sets that offer plenty of opportunity to disrupt the acting of the other players and make your own character look the biggest star.

The cast of the game have been converted to 3D and look truly fantastic, helping to bring the magic and fun of the Looney Tunes cartoons to life. Add to that the unique gameplay (which challenges you to out-dance and out-perform your fellow 'actors') and the originality and effort that has clearly been put into the whole project, and it looks like Infogrames could well be onto a winner here.



SPOOKY HAPPENINGS: What Looney Tunes game would be complete without a haunted house setting?



GOOD COP BAD COP

INFORMATION

Publisher Revolution
Developer In-house
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release Autumn 2002
Players TBA
Weblink www.revolution.co.uk/good_cop_bad_cop/index.html

GoodCopBadCop

WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

DO YOU FEEL LUCKY? WELL, DO YOU PUNK?



Third-person shooters always feel pretty much the same but Good Cop Bad Cop is hoping to break from tradition. In this game it's not a simple case of shoot first and ask questions later – well, not unless you want to!

You see, as the name of the game suggests, it is entirely up to you how you want to play the role of the lead man Ben Kellman. Should you wish to, it's possible to beat up suspects, wound informants and kill anyone you like in the quest for truth. The drawback is that this affects how the game plays out and it's up to the moral standing of the player to choose his own destination.

1ST OPINION
XBOX

ISN'T THAT BRAD PITT?

A very ambitious game, this has got some interesting ideas and should Revolution manage to pull them off successfully, you're going to have an extremely fun game to play.

1ST
OPINION
XBOXTASTY
TOON
ACTION

JUST LIKE THE OLD DAYS: Bugs does the old springs-on-feet routine one more time...

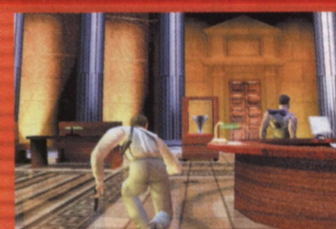


Games like this are definitely part of the reason for Microsoft deciding to get involved in the console market – multiplayer fun on a single machine is something that has never really taken off on the PC, but Xbox could redress the balance quite nicely. With great graphics, a wacky sense of humour and some frantic multiplayer fun, *Loons* has a lot going for it.

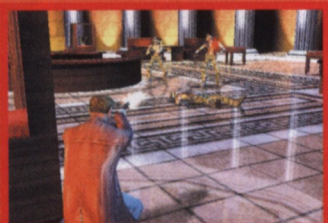


Cartoon capers in 3D!

“INFOGAMES COULD WELL BE ONTO A WINNER HERE”



FREEZE: There's only so much a cop can do to prevent loss of life – still, when it's criminals like this who cares?



EASY DOES IT: Just a little bit closer and you'll be able to knock him out without the worry of wasting a bullet.



“IT'S POSSIBLE TO BEAT UP SUSPECTS, WOUND INFORMANTS AND KILL ANYONE YOU LIKE”



BI: Show Replay Controls

SLYER THAN STALLONE: American football may look like an aggressive contact sport but it's the sly passes like this that can win the game.

NFL FEVER 2002

BIG MEN IN TIGHTS – THE AMERICAN WAY!

INFORMATION

Publisher Microsoft
Developer In-house
Genre Sports
Estimated Release Spring
Players 1-2
Weblink www.xbox.com/games/sports/nfl-fever-2002.htm



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

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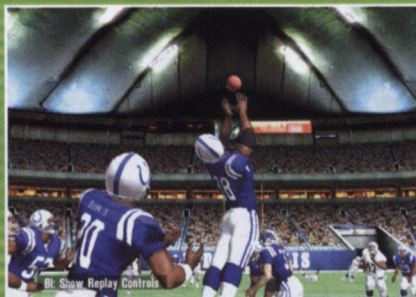
f all the American sports, this is probably the one feared the most by the British – which is understandable because after all, it's just not proper football, is it? If it was, you sure wouldn't be able to clothes-line an opposing player to the ground just for kicks!

Field sports don't get much more violent than this (that padding isn't just for show!) and *NFL Fever 2002* translates this perfectly with crushing realism. Full of detailed player models, plus all the official teams, this game is sure to have fans of American football queuing round the block. ●

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**

LOOKING MIGHTY FINE!

By the time EA gets around to releasing a *Madden* game the highly successful series will have some stiff competition in the shape of this title from Microsoft itself. The game certainly has enough to impress!



BI: Show Replay Controls



BI: Show Replay Controls

“FIELD SPORTS DON'T GET MUCH MORE VIOLENT THAN THIS”

INFORMATION

Publisher SEGA
Developer Smilebit
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1
Weblink www.smilebit.com/eng/game/gunvalkyrie.html



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View some more screenshots of SEGA's new game on TotalGames.net.

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES



WELL HELLO! Yes, it's a very nice gun – but can we forget about it for a moment and just talk about your breasts...



PRETTY: Aw... look at all the pretty lights! Almost makes you forget you're supposed to be eradicating a bunch of alien scum-buckets...

GUN VALKYRIE

VALKYRIES WERE MYTHICAL FEMALE WARRIORS WHO LOOKED GORGEOUS AND FOUGHT LIKE DEMONS. NOW ADD GUNS...

WHAT IF...

...the game included an option for a virtual reality peripheral – a suit that you could put on and thus control the characters in the game simply by doing whatever it was you wanted them to?

FORM FITTING: Hey, cool gun! Not exactly a handy size though, is it?



ou're in an alternate reality. Evil alien bugs are wreaking havoc. Who you gonna call... (hint: the clue's in the title).

Yes, in the finest traditions of all-action videogames, hordes of nasty, smelly, non-environmentally-friendly creatures are being generally unpleasant and it's up to you to sort things out – with extreme prejudice.

The basic idea of *Gun Valkyrie* shouldn't be much of a surprise – you play the part of a cybernetically-enhanced super-trooper (not to be confused with a

Super Trouper – that's a song by ABBA) who's got a big gun and a hankering for some alien butt-kicking.

As you crash into the first level you'll find yourself running around large areas filled with bug-like adversaries and blowing them all to hell, something which is achieved through the use of both analogue sticks – one to move and one to run. If this sounds tricky, that's because it is, at least until you get the hang of it, but once you do it's action all the way, and those bad boy bugs don't stand a chance! Well, that's the plan, anyway... ●



With eight different customisable weapons and a whole ton of characters running (or scuttling) around the screen at any one time, *Gun Valkyrie* is certainly very promising. Our only small niggle at this point is whether or not the control system might be too complex, particularly due to the sheer amount of stuff going on at any one time. The last thing you want when you've got alien bug-monsters coming at you is to be struggling to point both yourself and your gun in the right direction! Only time will tell whether the control system will be a flop.

SUMMARY: A slick arcade game from SEGA.



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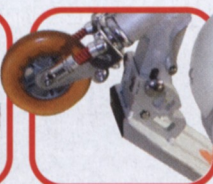
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RADIO CONTROL CARS

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INFORMATION

Publisher Microsoft
Developer In-house
Genre Sports
Estimated Release Launch
Players 1-4
Weblink www.microsoft.com/games/amped



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

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TotalGames.net is totally Amped – log on for more screenshots and a movie!

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FEEL THE CHILL!

XBOX

THIS AMP'S GOT THE DIAL
TURNED ALL THE WAY UP!

AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING

WHAT IF...

...the Free Ride simulation level was taken one step further? A nasty fall down a mountain would result in you being stuck in the snow for hours trying to attract attention with flares!



nowboarding games are snowboarding games, right? They're all the same – all you do is jump on a popular brand of board and cruise down a mountainside, trying to beat other racers or impress judges whilst throwing in tricks. Well not anymore, because this is exactly the kind of stereotype Microsoft is trying to get away from here.

Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding is an extreme sports bonanza that offers an original take on a tired concept. As the

label on the tin suggests, the entire game consists of freestyle boarding. Racking up ridiculous points or coming first are both mute points. What's the point of the game then, you ask? Well, imagine *Tony Hawk's* but on snow and you get the idea.

When you begin the game you're free to roam wherever you want on several mountainside locations, choosing your own lines to the bottom of the hill. The idea is still, of course, to pull off some gnarly tricks and look as cool as possible without sitting in a bath full of

frozen water eating an ice cream. However, in this game you're playing to the crowds or, more importantly, the talent-spotting photographers from a variety of magazines.

Every time one of these paparazzi snappers takes your picture you get exposure points that help you progress through the game. Eventually your character should become a snowboarding media whore, appearing on the cover of every extreme sports magazine across the world. Things do get a little bit more complicated than this as



IN CLOSE-UP

Since you're not restricted to racing, you can pretty much go anywhere you want – and the levels are so big it looks like hours of life will be sucked away!

IN CLOSE-UP

It may not make a difference to the gameplay, but if a game looks this good it's going to be a joy to play. It even has full real-time shadow and lighting effects!

IN CLOSE-UP

The level of detail on the character's faces is absolutely amazing. An image like this would have been part of a cut-scene prior to the game not too long ago.



SPINAL INJURY: Doing a backflip always seems like a really good idea till you realise you won't make it!



HEAVEN IS A... What snowboarding game would be complete without a half-pipe to show off your latest batch of tricks?



BRAAAAAAKE: When you're hurtling down a mountainside on a snowboard the term 'slowing down' is a foreign concept!

"THIS
EXTREME
SPORTS
BONANZA
IS AN
ORIGINAL
TAKE ON A
TIRED
CONCEPT"

YLE ING

there are hidden areas to be explored – most likely containing 'big' photographers. You've also got to contend with other riders (including pros) doing their thing, crashing and trying to get into the limelight.

Featuring some interesting Tony Hawk style elements, you'll also have a selection of different challenges to complete. The exact number of challenges hasn't been confirmed yet but there are six per run and considering there are 120 possible routes down the ▶

SMOOTH AS: The animation on the riders is so smooth you'll want to pull off tricks late into the night!



FACE FACTS

THINK YOU'VE SEEN 'REALISTIC' VIDEOGAME CHARACTERS? THINK AGAIN!

Perfection is incredibly difficult – in fact, impossible – to achieve. Whenever a videogame is released boasting realistic anything, the first thing you'll do is start to notice things that aren't quite right. Well, we don't know about you but when it comes to the character models in *Amped*, Microsoft isn't far off the perfection mark. They're so beautiful you could give them a big sloppy kiss – if you wanted to, that is.



BACK TO THE FUTURE: If you get bored of snowboarding you can always pretend your playing the hoverboard scene from *Back to the Future 2* – okay, maybe not! ↓

GET THE FUNK OUT

ALL BOW DOWN AND HAIL THE MIGHT OF THE STORAGE CAPACITY ON THE DVD DISC...

Amazingly, *Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding* includes 150 tunes to listen to whilst you do your thang, ranging from hip-hop and reggae right through to cutting edge Indy music. All of the bands have been specifically chosen and songs licensed. That's 100 hours of quality music! If you can't find anything you like, though, you can even create your own play list from MP3s on the hard drive. Repetitive sounds could just be a thing of the past.

LOOKING COOL: If we're not hideously mistaken that looks like a shell suit jacket – amazing how fashion goes full circle.



EXTREME LAZINESS: Now that's just cheating – this boarder blatantly can be arsed to queue up for the ski lift!

“ONE FEATURE THAT IS SURE TO BE ABUSED IS THE ABILITY TO THROW SNOWBALLS AT OTHER BOARDERS”

**1ST
OPINION
XBOX**

**SMART
SNOWY
SPORTS!**

The Xbox launch line-up is looking stronger with every passing moment and *Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding* is going to be a jewel in an already big crown for Microsoft. Ironically, the fact that this looks superb visually is irrelevant – this only compliments the already superb gameplay. To some extent Microsoft may be taking a bit of a risk by tampering with the generic race/stunt formula but we reckon this is going to redefine the way gamers look at snowboarding titles forever.

► mountains, that could be a hell of a lot of gameplay for your money!

Locations for the game have been taken from the real world and digitally transmogrified into the beating heart of the Xbox. The merging 120 runs on offer are split between Utah's Brighton, Vermont's Stratton and the California Snow Summit. You also get the pleasure of riding some fantasy venues designed by – wait for it – none other than Chris Gunnerson! No, we have absolutely no idea who he is either but apparently the man is a world-renowned terrain artist so you should see some quality fictional powder to get high on.

From what we've seen of the game so far the level design is looking superb, the draw distance

is amazing and you get a great sense of awe when you see the size of the area at your command. The slopes are alive with crowds, other boarders and the ever-important photographers who are all ready to be impressed by your moves. Add to this the stunning visuals and some of the best character models we've ever seen, with seriously smooth animation, and you've got one definite must-have title for the Xbox launch.

Like a lot of the other launch games, *Amped* also makes full use of multiplayer gaming elements. A free-roaming multiplayer mode will allow you to chill on the slopes with your mates and challenge them to freestyle competitions. One feature that is sure to be abused is the ability to throw snowballs at other boarders in multiplayer! This is an

inspired idea that will add an extra element of fun to the proceedings – maybe they will add an option to build a snowman or make snow angels as well! Still, it's the small touches like those snowballs that make games all the more fun to play. Online snowball fights – now there's an idea to waste a few hours if ever there was one! ●



RED OR DEAD: Looks like a nuclear holocaust has stripped the trees – which must mean you're boarding on fallout dust... cool!



SUMMARY: One of the best extreme sports titles to date!

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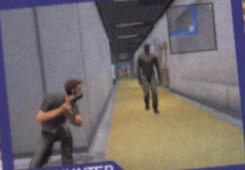


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INFORMATION

Publisher.....SEGA
Developer.....SmileBit
Genre.....Skating
Release.....Summer
Players.....1-4
Weblink.....www.jsrf.com



WORDS: MARTIN MATHERS

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EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES

JET SET R

SEGA GOES BACK TO THE FUTURE WITH ITS NEW SK

WHAT IF...

...the game had more of a *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* flavour, incorporating more rewards for tricks and stunts on top of the graffiti side of things? Might make a funky addition to the gameplay...



A

hh, teenage rebellion – there's nothing quite like a bunch of youngsters trying to prove that they're better than everyone else. Unfortunately, the best we get around our parts right now is a small group of spotty youths in baseball caps hanging around outside McDonalds... but it's not going to like that in the future. Instead, you'll have to cope with in-line skate-wearing, spray can-toting, crazy music-listening kids racing around the streets, spraying anything they see with their gang-related tags... at least, you will if SEGA has anything to do with it.

Now, even though it quite clearly isn't a threat any more to consoles like the Xbox, we've got fond memories of the Dreamcast. It had a number of top-quality titles that oozed innovation and proved that

SEGA could make some of the best games on the planet. One of the better titles we can think of was *Jet Set Radio* – a crazy, cartoon-style skating game where the aim was to rebel against authority and paint the town... well, a number of different colours. Of course, it had problems, but then isn't that what sequels are for? Of course it is – which is why we're getting incredibly excited about the fact that *Jet Set Radio Future* (the follow-up to *Jet Set Radio*) is coming exclusively to the Xbox, thanks to those lovely SEGA people. Ahh, bless.

Despite the efforts of the GGs in the first game, life in Tokyo hasn't changed much, and several years into the future since their last outing (hence the new 'Future' tag on the end of the title) the gang are still facing the pressures of conformity. The police are out to get them, rival gangs are invading

IN CLOSE-UP

If you look around the city, you'll find people who are on your side about the whole graffiti thing. Impress them with your skating and they might even join you!

IN CLOSE-UP

If you want to make a name for yourself, you're going to have to mark every inch of your territory... especially those hard-to-reach spots.

IN CLOSE-UP

Not surprisingly, there are more than a few people who don't take too kindly to your graffiti work – most noticeably, the rival gangs populating the city streets.

“IF IT AIN'T BROKE, YOU ONLY HAVE TO FIX IT A LITTLE BIT TO MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY PERFECT”



RADIO FUTURE

E-MAD GAME...

their turf and everywhere you look, there's nothing but blank walls filling the city. So what can you do? Why, you can get out there with your spray cans and show everyone who rules in this crummy town, that's what! Yep, SEGA has quite clearly decided that if it ain't broke, you only have to fix it a little bit to make it absolutely perfect. Thank the Lord for that...

The idea is a simple one – armed with a number of spraycans of paint (which you'll need to replenish around the city at various intervals), you need to skate around and wipe out any trace of the rival gangs. How do you do that? Well, each gang has its own 'tag', a painted symbol used to show superiority. By finding these tags and spraying over the top of them with your own, you can prove that you're the ruler of this district... well, that's the theory ▶

オレと勝負したいのか?



RABBIT RABBIT: You'll need to talk to all the fellow skaters you meet...

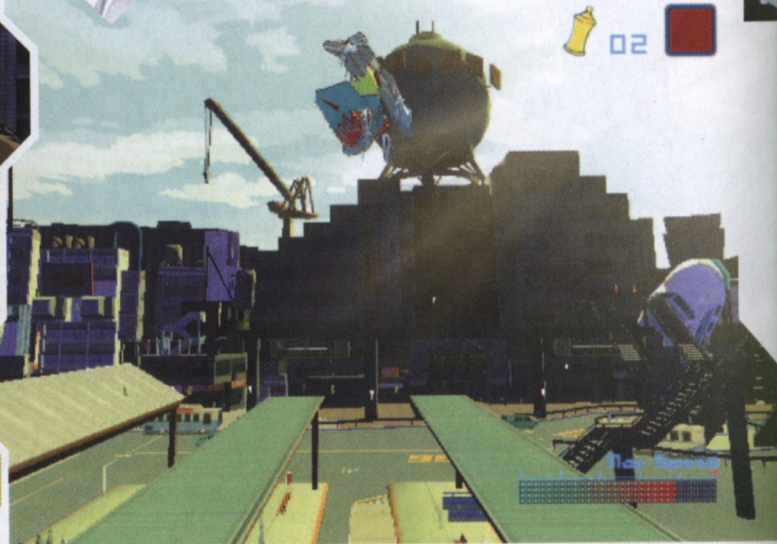
このドクガングカを1周してみろ。



WHAT A SIGHT: The awesome power of the Xbox allows *Jet Set Radio Future* to offer some massive levels. You can skate around all of the city, you know!



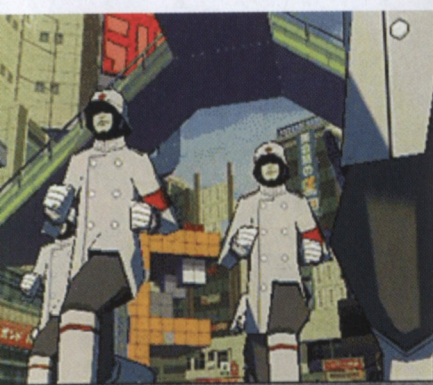
FLYING HIGH: Thanks to the improved tricks and stunts that are possible in *Jet Set Radio Future*, you can now fly up higher than ever before!



GRANDMA, WHAT GREAT MUSIC YOU'VE GOT!

WHY, IT'S ALL THE BETTER TO SKATE TO, MY DEAR...

Of course, a game like *Jet Set Radio Future* needs a kicking soundtrack... much like the original game had. Thankfully, SEGA has thought about this and enlisted the skills of Wave Master, its in-house audio studio, who managed to do such great things the first time around. That's not all, though; on top of that, SEGA has brought in world-famous production experts The Latch Brothers (a bunch of blokes who apparently like to dress up as giant animals... bizarre) and these guys are currently remixing tunes by bands like BS2000, Q-Tip and Bran Van 3000 to include in the game. Like we said, there's nothing quite like a top soundtrack to get your gaming juices going...



TURNING JAPANESE: The graphical style of *Jet Set Radio Future* is what sets it apart from other games.



"THE XBOX VERSION OF JET SET RADIO IS A GIANT LEAP ABOVE ANYTHING THAT THE DREAMCAST COULD DO"

► anyway. To reach all of the tags, though, (as well as the blank walls that are just ripe for the spraying) you'll need to get the hang of pulling off some blinding tricks and stunts along a variety of ramps, rails and walls – and the better you do, the more you'll find!

Of course, that's not the half of it. Along the way, you'll meet up with new characters who have no love for either you or the rival gangs... they're pretty much neutral in this whole war. Still, that's not to

say they can't be persuaded to join your motley band of rebels – all you have to do is prove how good you are with your skates. Whether it's an all-out race around town or matching them trick-for-trick on your highly versatile skates, you'll need to recruit as many people as possible before you can claim to have one of the best gangs on the block...

Not surprisingly, the Xbox version of *Jet Set Radio* is a giant leap above anything that the Dreamcast could do. By improving

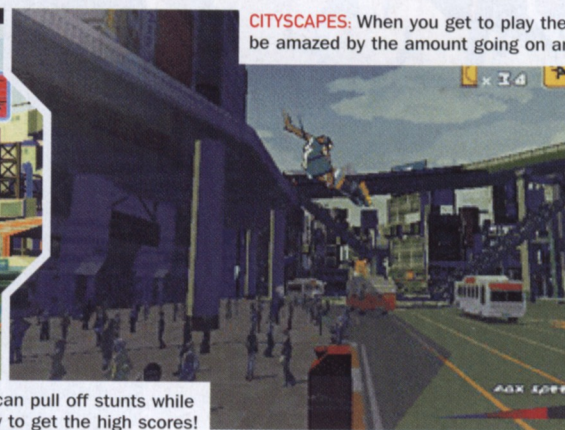
the already excellent cel-shaded animation and combining it with some rather lovely blurring effects (in particular, when the skaters use their boost abilities), SEGA has done a wonderful job... and we've only seen a brief taster of what's on offer! On top of that, we've already had confirmation of a number of the extras that'll be thrown in with the Xbox game – the ability to create your very own gang tag, as well as being able to play against your friends in an exclusive multiplayer mode, are all things

that we're getting very excited about. The one area that SEGA has yet to comment on is the online aspect of it all, but considering that the Dreamcast version had the option to go on the Net (although not in a playing aspect), we doubt it's something that SEGA will simply forget about for the Xbox release. One thing's for sure, though... *Jet Set Radio Future* is going to make one hell of an impact when it lands on the Xbox, and we'll be the first on the scene when it does! ●



SHOWING OFF: Don't forget that you can pull off stunts while spraying your tags... it's the only way to get the high scores!

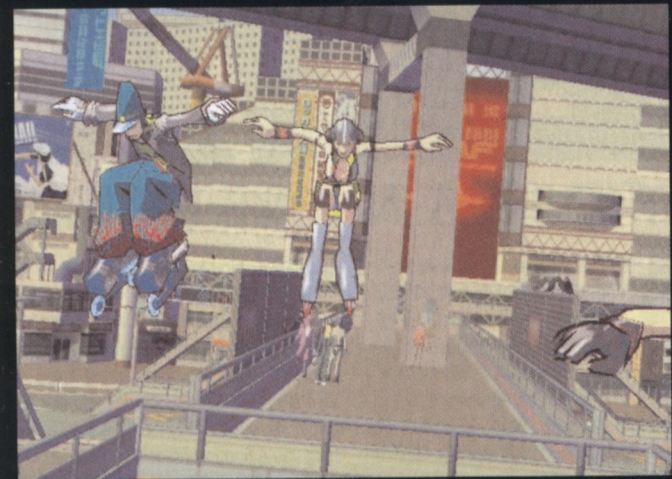
CITYSCAPES: When you get to play the game, you'll be amazed by the amount going on around the city!



TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

BRING ALONG YOUR FRIENDS... THEY'RE ALL WELCOME TO PLAY TOO!

Whereas the original *Jet Set Radio* was strictly a one-player affair, this time around you've got the opportunity to play against your friends to see who's the greatest *Jet Set Radio* player ever. Although SEGA is keeping tight-lipped about what kind of things you'll get to do, we're sure that it'll include such delights as a race around town (with the fastest skater being the winner) and a graffiti extravaganza, where the person who sprays the most tags around town comes out on top. Needless to say, SEGA is going to make sure this is a multiplayer experience like no other!



ATTACK OF THE CLONES: There are some very bizarre goings-on in this game – all will be revealed in a full review soon in XBM!



カシと無食したいのか?



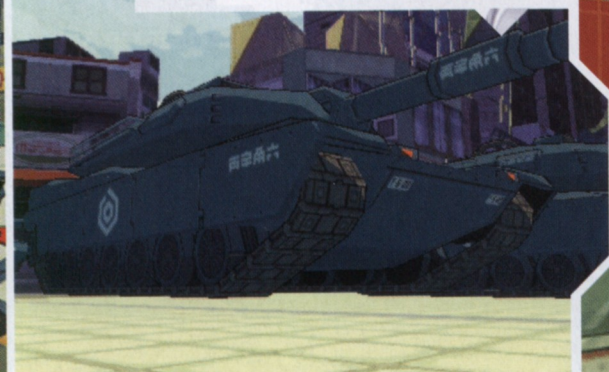
SAFE WITH SEGA: Now that SEGA has given up the console business to concentrate on software, we're guaranteed some great games for Xbox!



WHAT THE... We don't know what he's saying either!



TANKS A LOT: Cause the police too much trouble and they'll send in the army to stop you...



UP 'N' AT 'EM! In some of the replays you can almost see up the girl's skirt (sorry)!

JET SET RADIO FUTURE



GET YOUR SKATES ON, SEGA!

Although very little has actually been said about *Jet Set Radio Future* by SEGA itself, the game is already looking very, very good and could prove to be the title that actually sells the console. The cel-shaded visuals first established on the Dreamcast have been refined to the point of perfection and, combined with the amazing effects the Xbox is capable of, look absolutely gorgeous. As long as SEGA can ensure that it delivers a fast-paced and involving game to go with it all (and we're not doubting SEGA's abilities for a second), it looks like one of the games you simply have to own when the machine launches will be *Jet Set Radio Future*.

SUMMARY: Looking like another must-have game!

INFORMATION

Publisher Konami
Developer In-house
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release March
Players 1
Weblink www.konami.com/main/games/airforcedeltastorm

AIR FORCE DELTA STORM

WORDS: ROY KIMBER

TOTAL GAMES.net XBOX

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

Bag yourself some more glorious shots of this game on TotalGames.net.

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES

AIR FORCE DELTA STORM

TAKE TO THE SKIES IN SOME OF THE WORLD'S

WHAT IF...

...you could attend an 'elite' training school, where you began a little semi-hostile rivalry with a fellow hotshot pilot that resulted in you getting your co-pilot killed? Or was that *Top Gun*?



Like many games in the initial line-up of Xbox titles, *Air Force Delta Storm* is a sequel to a game previously released on another format, *Air Force Delta*.

It's almost like the Xbox came along and everyone suddenly said, "Hey, you know that game we produced on the Dreamcast/PlayStation2/Nintendo 64 that wasn't quite all we had hoped for? Why, let's do it on the Xbox!" Of course, if *Air*

Force Delta Storm is anything to go by, that's not necessarily a bad thing!

So, what's it all about? Well, you'd be forgiven for looking at the screenshots and assuming that this game is the first Xbox flight-sim, because the aircraft and the terrain shown certainly look like the sort of thing you'd find in one of those games. Except that it's not. No, you don't need to memorise 200 pages of operational instructions and practically be a qualified

"JUST ABOUT ANY MODERN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT THAT YOU CARE TO MENTION IS INCLUDED IN THE GAME"

IN CLOSE-UP

You're not going to get far without this! Displays all friendly and non-friendly air and ground-based targets – essential!

IN CLOSE-UP

This displays your current weapon and how many you've got left – which is not enough, in this particular case!

IN CLOSE-UP

Lets you know how far you are from the ground – doesn't take into account buildings though, so use your eyes too!

AIR FORCE DELTA STORM

THE WORLD'S HOTTEST FIGHTER AIRCRAFT... AND SHOOT STUFF!

pilot (as you seem to do with many flight simulations these days) to take to the air in this game. The emphasis is on action, and what you're actually getting is a title that – once you ignore the gorgeous graphics – has probably got more in common with the arcade game *Afterburner* than it does with some of the PC flight sims.

Okay, so maybe we're generalising a little, but the fact is that in *Air Force Delta Storm* you get to fly around 70 different combat aircraft, and you don't even have to worry about using your flaps – the emphasis is on arcade-style

gameplay. Effectively what you've got is a state-of-the-art shoot-'em-up, but with the kind of graphical excellence and level of detail previously only really seen in flight simulations.

The gameplay is mission based – a total of more than 50 are on offer – and the playing areas come in a variety of different decors from harsh, seemingly endless deserts to packed and intricately detailed cityscapes. Missions comprise all the usual things that you'd expect, from ground attack sorties for which you need to pick the right kind of aircraft to all-out air-to-air

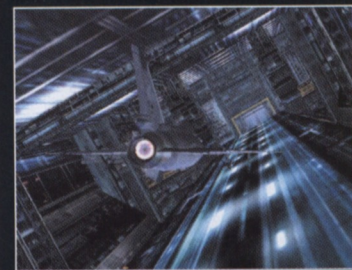
dogfights against some seriously talented enemy pilots!

Just about any modern fighter aircraft that you care to mention is included in the game – and they're all the real thing too, which is a little weird. Have you noticed how no-one ever seems to have a problem with getting the licence for any fighter aircraft and yet car manufacturers are a nightmare? Oh well, we're not complaining! Anyway, if you like your combat in the air, then you're going to want to take *Air Force Delta Storm* for a test flight! ●

USE THE FORCE!

SOME OF THE ENVIRONMENTS IN THE GAME LOOK A LITTLE FAMILIAR...

From some of the screenshots, you'd be forgiven for thinking that this was a sci-fi shoot-'em-up! Is it just us, or does this look an awful lot like the inside of the Death Star from *Star Wars*? What? Oh... just us then.



WHY WAIT?

IF YOU LIKE THE IDEA OF THIS, WHY NOT TRY SOMETHING IN THE MEANTIME?

While *Air Force Delta Storm* won't be appearing on UK shores for a while yet, if you've got access to a PlayStation2 then you'll be able to get a taste of what to expect by playing Virgin's *Top Gun*. This is another arcade-style game that boasts flight-sim quality graphics, and we have to admit that it's pretty darn sweet...



STAY ON TARGET: Well what are you waiting for? Targets on – waste 'em now!



COLOUR COORDINATED: That sunset is making our aircraft look pink! Aagh! Someone do something – quick!



COOL KIT: Got a bombing mission to go on? Then you can't do much better than the A10 Intruder. Yours for thirteen-fifty, part exchange.



1ST OPINION
XBOX

CLASSIC KONAMI ACTION!

What can we say? We're smitten, and so will you be once you take to the air in one of the painstakingly reproduced versions of some damn sexy jet aircraft! You might want to be careful on your first few missions though, because this is yet another Xbox title that presents you with some absolutely breathtaking skylines which – while utterly gorgeous to look at – may well become a bit of a hazard when you're at the controls. Pay too much attention to them and chances are you won't spot that MIG on your twenty!

SUMMARY: A great-looking flight simulation.

INFORMATION

Publisher THQ
Developer In-house
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release Summer
Players TBA
Weblink www.thq.com



WORDS: MIKE RICHARDSON

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You'll find more on this and all the other Xbox games on our Web site.

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS WALLPAPER
SCREENSAVER MOVIES



FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT AT HIGH SPEEDS AND HIGH ALTITUDES!

WHAT IF...

...this game didn't have a cool name, mysterious name? Well, it would - in fact - be called Hunter, because this is exactly what Yager means!



Crossing genres seems to be the new in thing at the moment - this is by no means bad as it pretty much guarantees an original experience. The newly announced Yager, from THQ, mixes air combat-style action with 3D action adventure, whilst stirring in a non-linear futuristic government conspiracy story!

These kind of goings on would've been classed way ahead of their time not too long ago and mixing genres this radically

IN CLOSE-UP



This isn't just a shoot-'em-up. The whole point of this game is that there is a story with character - so there's no lifeless ships here.

IN CLOSE-UP



At least there is no danger of running out of firepower! Your craft is kitted out with a serious number of missiles, weapons and other stuff!



WAR TORN: Gone are the days when flight games featured flat, barren landscapes with one building per level.



YAGER

would've seemed like a big risk. But this isn't yesterday; this is tomorrow and the Xbox is the console to cope with such a mammoth task. The game world itself is huge and full of characters that are waiting for your interaction during the numerous missions that change depending on your performance.

This isn't just a single player experience, though, as you'll be able to take part in sprawling multiplayer battles, which include the obligatory deathmatch alongside some more tactical team fighting. Quite how the

3D-action bit will fit into this isn't clear, but you can bet that there are quite a few surprises hidden away in Yager. ●



INSIDER INFORMATION

WHY OPT FOR THE THIRD-PARTY VIEW WHEN YOU CAN ENJOY THIS?

Avid racing fans will always tell you that you can never 'become one' with the car unless you play from the in-car view. We're sure this is just a personal taste thing, but when it comes to fun and speed you can't beat the good old cockpit view. It immerses you deeper into the game and takes you further away from the troubles of the real world.



1ST OPINION
XBOX

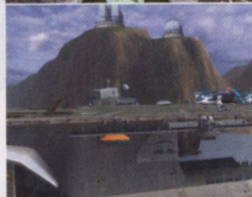
FLIGHT OF FANTASY ON XBOX

There is a whole stack of brand-new games and bright ideas just queuing up to prove themselves on the Xbox. So, *Yager* may just be another in the increasingly long line, but the mixing of genres does make it a little bit more ambitious than most. If this gamble pays off then *Yager* is going to make for a superb next-generation game.



SUMMARY Some interesting ideas.

"YAGER MIXES AIR COMBAT-STYLE ACTION WITH 3D ACTION ADVENTURE"



WINGMAN: The detail on the ships in this game is superb. Check out that gorgeous looking craft you get to pilot.



HUNTER: THE RECKONING

"RESIDENT EVIL FANS ARE GOING TO WET THEMSELVES WHEN THEY SEE THIS"



HUNTER: THE RECKONING

RESIDENT EVIL MEETS GAUNTLET...

INFORMATION

Publisher Interplay
Developer High Voltage Software
Genre Shooting
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1-4
Weblink www.interplay.com/hunter



WORDS: ROY KIMBER

In what is starting to become a noticeable pattern, *Hunter: The Reckoning* takes place in yet another 'alternative reality', similar to – and yet different from – our own. The difference in this case comes in the form of vampires, zombies and werewolves, who exist in abundance within society but whom, for some reason, no-one is able to see. Well, no-one, except the Hunters. These are individuals who have been through some kind of shocking experience and thus can see through the veil of 'normalcy' that the nasty undead have cast upon everyone.

Able to see clearly the evil among them, and how that evil is manipulating and feeding off ordinary people, the Hunters band together in a crusade to rid the world of the undead. In practical terms this means up to four players tooling up and setting out to kick some serious zombie ass!

Gameplay is very reminiscent of *Gauntlet Legends*, with up to four players on one screen and the camera pulling in and out to cover the action, which is fairly frenetic and never slows down. *Resident Evil* fans are going to wet themselves when they see this! ●

1ST OPINION
XBOX

ZOMBIE HEAVEN!

This game has a lot going for it – the four characters are suitably diverse, the action is frantic and continuous and the gore factor is extreme! The fact that up to four players can take part in the action and just jump in at any time (à la *Gauntlet*) is a definite bonus!



INFORMATION

Publisher Eidos Interactive
Developer Crystal Dynamics
Genre Racing
Estimated Release 14 March
Players 1-4
Weblink [www.crystald.com/
games/embed.html?gmid=106](http://www.crystald.com/games/embed.html?gmid=106)



WORDS: ROY KIMBER

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totalGames.net is the place to be if you want to find out more!

EXTRA SCREENSHOTS INTERVIEW
WALLPAPER MOVIES

ONE TO WATCH!

XBOX



IN CLOSE-UP

This is where any weapons or power-ups appear on the screen once you've collected them. These work very much as they do in other racing games.

IN CLOSE-UP

The bar at the bottom of the screen shows exactly how far you are along the track. It comes in very handy for a quick progress update.

IN CLOSE-UP

This icon in the bottom right of the screen shows your position in the field – in this case, third. Plenty of time for improvement yet though – just you wait!

KEEP ON RUNNING: Whether you try it in one-player or multiplayer, the graphical look of this game is just great!

CRASH BANDICOOT MEETS DIDDY KONG RACING...

WHAT IF...

...Crash Bandicoot was a hidden character in this game? After all, he's had loads of experience of this sort of manic racing action and would surely turn out to be an expert!

R

acing games have always been a popular videogame format, and they come in all shapes and sizes – one of the more enjoyable styles being the cartoon racer. PlayStation had *Crash Bandicoot*, Nintendo 64 had *Diddy Kong Racing* and Dreamcast got *Wacky Races*, to name just three. And it looks like the first one to hit Microsoft's new baby will be *Mad Dash Racing*, from veteran developer Crystal Dynamics.

The name pretty much describes exactly what you can expect from the gameplay – the idea is to pick one of nine somewhat wacky characters and then race them through eight bright, cartoon-esque levels against a variety of slightly unhinged opponents. Each of the characters that you can choose from has a very distinct personality, and this is reflected in the game animation. More importantly, though, it is reflected in how they handle, with your choice of character affecting your choice of

route through each level of the game. On the subject of the levels – they're huge. Big just doesn't suffice. Mammoth is a better word (as in 'really big' rather than 'long-dead hairy elephant'). Each environment seems to go on for absolutely ages and they're all packed with more alternate routes, short cuts and bizarre hazards than you can shake a demented cartoon animal at.

The object of the game is somewhere this side of simple – you need to dash (madly) along the level and make sure that you're the first one past the finish line – simple. To help and/or hinder your progress and that of your fellow mad dashers, all

“DASH (MADLY) ALONG THE LEVEL AND MAKE SURE THAT YOU'RE THE FIRST ONE PAST THE FINISH LINE – SIMPLE AS THAT”

DASH, BASH OR GLIDE!

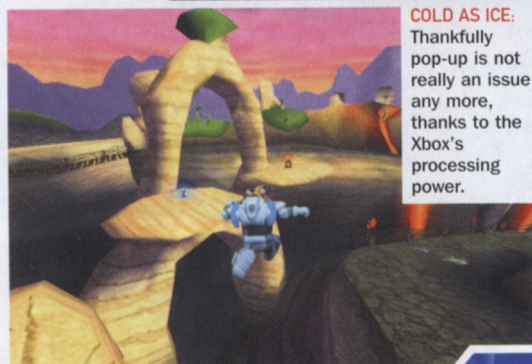
THE CHARACTERS IN THIS GAME LOOK CRAZY AND BEHAVE IN WAYS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

Rather than the differences between the main characters simply being aesthetic, they each fit into three categories: Dashers, Bashers and Gliders. Dashers have a good speed on a straight, Bashers can smash through obstacles, and Gliders... well, as you'd guess from the name they can fly for short distances, which lets them reach routes that others characters might not be able to.

1



2



COLD AS ICE: Thankfully pop-up is not really an issue any more, thanks to the Xbox's processing power.



FLY BOY: This guy's called Zero-G and he's a Glider – hence the jet pack that comes in handy on levels with lots of jumps.



It would be easy to dismiss this game as just another cartoon racer, but when you play it you realise that an awful lot of attention to detail has gone into creating it. The characters are extremely expressive and have very distinct personalities, while the environments that you race through are almost too gorgeous – when you see some of the reflection mapping on one of the stages it's all too tempting to just stop racing for a moment and get a better look! If blood and guts is your thing then this isn't for you, but otherwise it's looking pretty good!

SUMMARY: One for the younger players out there.

“EACH OF THE CHARACTERS THAT YOU CAN CHOOSE FROM HAS A VERY DISTINCT PERSONALITY”



POSERS!

CHECK OUT THE WEIRDOS THAT YOU'RE GOING TO MEET!

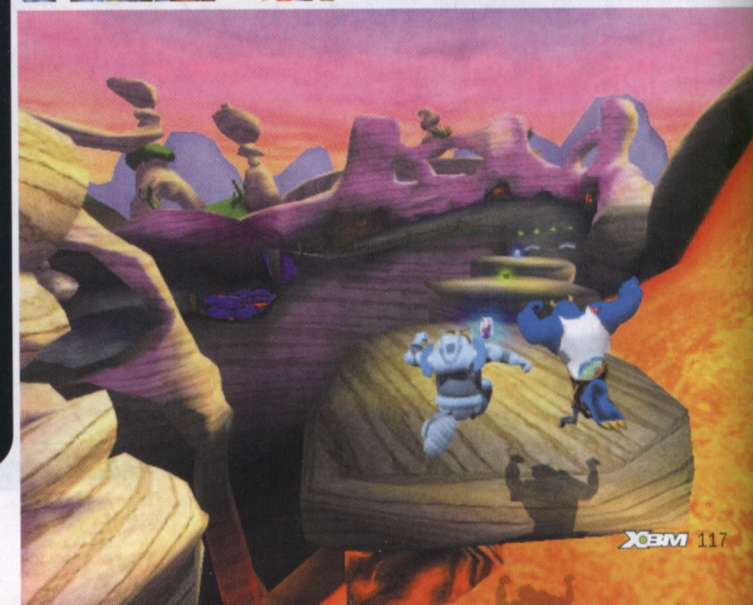
Here we find a selection of the main characters posing for the camera. What we want to know, though, is who that cute chick with red hair is – and what's she planning on doing with that spanner?



WEB SITE WONDERS: Visit the official *Mad Dash Racing* Web site and you can download wallpaper and screensavers of the game!

ING WITH BELLS ON!

sorts of classic cartoon trickery is available along the way, from rolling boulders to the always-popular trip-wire linked to sticks of TNT. Aside from that, it's basically just a case of getting out there and racing! Up to four players can compete in a race that is viewed split-screen, and the gameplay is easy-to-pick-up, fast and furious! To compliment the stunning visuals of the game there's a suitably adrenaline-inducing soundtrack comprising a whole bunch of pulse-pounding offerings from well-known artists like Fat Boy Slim and Moby, and each character has a range of different moves for you to master once you've got the hang of the basics. All in all, *Mad Dash Racing* offers exactly what it says on the tin! ●



INBOX

YOUR CHANCE TO LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT LIFE, THE UNIVERSE AND XBOX...

Welcome to Inbox, the section of the magazine where you get to have your say. Now usually, when putting together the letters page for the launch issue of a magazine,

you're faced with the problem of having no letters. Some magazines go to great lengths to make up letters, but we feel that would simply be cheating you, so we've taken a

different approach. Fortunately, we've had an Xbox Web site running on TotalGames.net since April, and this has generated plenty of questions and mail. Paragon Publishing also launched GEAR magazine a few months back, including a feature on Xbox, and this also prompted readers to write in, so for this debut of **XBM**'s letters page, we've collated the best letters and mails together from these sources. Enjoy!

GET IN TOUCH

IF YOU WANT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US HERE AT **XBM** YOU CAN DO SO IN FIVE WAYS...

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Now please don't laugh in my face

because there might be a very simple answer to my question. I was reading your Xbox feature in issue one (GEAR magazine) which was really helpful and packed with great screenshots, but I still have to find out one thing that you didn't touch upon. Will the Xbox be backward compatible with old PC CD-ROM games? Please, I really must know, it's keeping me awake because I've always been a PC fan, but I'm fed up of constantly upgrading! Xbox could be the answer.

James Marsham, Gloucester

Let's set the record straight from the start – the Xbox is not a PC. Microsoft may be the largest manufacturer of PC software

in the known universe, but its new console is not a PC upgrade kit. It's a stand alone machine with new technology, new chips and new software. You can't simply stick a PC CD-ROM game into the Xbox and expect it to work – it just won't happen. Having said that, Microsoft has ensured that the Xbox has a very developer-friendly development system, which means that any game created for PC CD-ROM can quite easily be converted for Xbox, so many of the new PC games in development are also looking at simultaneous Xbox releases. This is good news for all gamers, as titles like *Max Payne*, *Championship Manager* and *Unreal* were all PC CD-ROM classics, and they're now looking hot on Xbox.

I have a bit of a problem

At the moment I currently own a PSone and an N64 but I'm looking to bring my collection up to date. The problem is that I'm torn between the PlayStation2 and the Xbox.

At the moment I like the look of the games coming out on both the consoles but I am a little bit worried about the whole DVD thing. I've heard rumours that the PlayStation2 is an appalling DVD player and my friend even said that some discs refused to work properly on his PlayStation2! Call me weird but if I'm spending a lot of money on something I want it to actually work.

Have you heard anything about the Xbox DVD player and if so, what problems am I likely to encounter. Surely it can't be as bad as the PlayStation2?

Arachnophobe, via email





PlayStation2 has had problems with the DVD playback – it's one of the most criticised aspects of the console. To stop people copying DVDs onto video, Sony refused to bundle the machine with a proper RGB lead, instead giving users an RF TV cable. As anyone who knows anything about DVD will tell you, the important difference is the picture and sound quality, but if you're pushing these through an RF cable you are going to lose quality significantly. When people tried to use SCART cables the picture came out in green, which didn't make Sony look very good either!

Xbox runs all its software from DVD-9 discs, so is compatible with all DVDs. All you need to play movies is the remote control device that is sold separately for £19.99. The reason Microsoft has

chosen to sell this separately is that there is a charge paid to the trademark owners of DVD that's incorporated into all DVD players sold; as some people may not want to play DVDs, Microsoft thought it would be fairer to put this cost into the remote price, not the price of the console.

So is this Xbox console going to be any good then or what? Don't get me wrong, I really want this thing to work but it does worry me that Microsoft has absolutely no experience when it comes to console games. I so want this to turn around and knock my socks off – please tell me it's not going to be another 3DO.
Satan's Lapdog, from TotalGames.net forum

IT DOES WORRY ME THAT MICROSOFT HAS ABSOLUTELY NO EXPERIENCE WHEN IT COMES TO CONSOLE GAMES

SATAN'S LAPDOG, TOTALGAMES.NET FORUM

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3DO? You've got to be joking! Although, *Need for Speed* was a fantastic game on Panasonic's ill-fated console. Well, Satan's Lapdog (if that is really your name!), all you've got to do is take a look through the pages of XBM to see for yourself that Xbox is not going to be another 3DO. With so many top games ready for launch you're going to be spoilt for choice. The 3DO only had a couple of really good games, then a bunch of mediocre stuff, before it burnt out – the stuff we're seeing on Xbox is out of this world, and we're talking games for release all through next year!

I've seen the stats and they're very impressive, but what about the games? After all, just because a machine claims it can do X number of polygons, doesn't mean the games can ever reach that figure! Some of the screenshots admittedly look nice, but some of them seem too good to be true. I seriously doubt *Dead Or Alive 3* will be looking as good as that when it's actually moving. Hey, I know I'm eternally sceptical but I was impressed by the machine specs of the PS2 until I saw the first batch of games! Why don't consoles just admit what they're really capable of before the launch. It would do them a lot of favours in the long run.

Mnemenh, TotalGames.net forum



You're quite right. Some of the screenshots Microsoft has been sending out do look too good to be true – but that's because they have been dumped from the Xbox development kits and are usually from replay modes and special development viewpoints. The dev kits can output images in an ultra-high resolution mode. When the games themselves are running on your TV screen they will still look good, but how good will depend on the quality of your TV. You'll also be watching from behind the character/car/plane instead of some fictitious development angle. Rest assured though, all the screenshots you can see in XBM this issue are pure Xbox – there's no giggery-pokery going on here!

I SERIOUSLY DOUBT DEAD OR ALIVE 3 WILL BE LOOKING AS GOOD AS THAT WHEN IT'S ACTUALLY MOVING

MNEMENH, TOTALGAMES.NET FORUM



XBM FORUM

Our Web site at xbox.totalgames.net has a forum that's perfect for raising Xbox issues, chatting with other Xbox fans or making sarcastic comments

about the GameCube and PlayStation2. You can log on with your own unique username and post messages, start your own threads and even add icons

to your messages. Each issue we will print the best comments right here in the Inbox. Here's a glance at what's been going on over the last few weeks...

TIP: If you put smiley faces into your messages, our system will automatically turn them into little icons like this...



AUTHOR	TOPIC: DOES THE XBOX HAVE AN IMAGE PROBLEM?
Richard Melville Administrator	posted 13 March 2001 06:23 PM Does the Xbox have an image problem in that it is made by Microsoft? Will the Microsoft badge mean that images of Windows 3.1 and a bespectacled Bill Gates come into your dreams? Certainly, it isn't a problem for Microsoft-friendly US gamers but are Europeans more sceptical of the big M? IP: Logged
KimWild Learner Member	posted 13 March 2001 11:14 Yes, I think the main problem aside from the trust thing is that Microsoft has been associated with PCs for so long, it's hard to actually think of the Xbox as a console. IP: Logged
Stench Learner Member	posted 14 March 2001 04:42 PM I don't think US gamers are particularly friendly to Microsoft either. But they do like the fact that a machine is designed in the USA - I guess we'd feel the same if a big UK console was coming out. I guess those feelings will fade when people start to see the games coming out. IP: Logged
Richard Melville Administrator	posted 15 March 2001 09:38 AM Really - look at the games! They're great. The launch games will make mincemeat out of every PS2 game we've seen over the last nine months. Not hard, I know, but it proves Microsoft has a better launch planned than Sony. IP: Logged
KimWild Learner Member	posted 15 March 2001 07:17 PM That's not hard either. Still, anything could happen between now and launch. IP: Logged
AUTHOR	TOPIC: XBOX ON TV
TheShape Learner Member	posted 13 October 2001 07:01 PM Anyone else see that sweet Xbox footage on BBC News 24 last night? Full screen and hi-res, better than those mpegs we've seen. Looks great in action! IP: Logged
Stench Learner Member	posted 13 October 2001 07:04 PM Didn't catch it. But does it look any better than the PS2? Better than MGS? IP: Logged
Bluesbro Learner Member	posted 13 October 2001 07:09 PM I'm not allowed to watch TV after 6pm as mum said that anything after <i>Neighbours</i> is the work of the Devil. After that I get locked back up in my cupboard to ward off the demons y'see... IP: Logged
TheShape Learner Member	posted 13 October 2001 07:16 PM Stench: wash your mouth out with Fruit Pastels; nothing looks better than MGS2, it's got bullet-time for chrissakes. No. But it did have some smart effects that I haven't seen on PS2... yet. IP: Logged
Stench Learner Member	posted 13 October 2001 07:34 PM Yeah, but it's made by Microsoft. How could it possibly be anything other than awesome... I mean, these guys make Windows, Office and Autoroute Express... I just can't wait, I may even wet myself IP: Logged

“ THE LAUNCH GAMES WILL MAKE MINCEMEAT OUT OF EVERY PS2 GAME WE'VE SEEN OVER THE LAST NINE MONTHS ”

RICHARD MELVILLE, TOTALGAMES.NET FORUM



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REVIEWED!

NEW UK DVDS THIS ISSUE:
PEARL HARBOR, PLANET OF
THE APES, STAR TREK II,
ANGEL, THE WIZARD OF OZ,
CAST AWAY, THE CONTENDER,
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REVIEWS OF
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KNOW ONCE
AND FOR ALL
JUST HOW
AMAZING
XBOX IS!
HERE'S WHAT
WE'RE
PLANNING
FOR OUR
DEFINITIVE
XBM REVIEWS
SECTION...

MAIN TEXT

HONEST REVIEWS FROM VIDEOGAME EXPERTS!

One of the XBM videogame experts will be writing the main body text of the review, giving you the full backstory behind the game and telling you how many levels there may be, how many cars you can drive... you know the kind of thing. They will end their review with a critical comment on the game and give it a score out of ten.



Simpsons... meet the Simpsons, they're a modern stone-age family! Oh hang on, no... that's the Flintstones!

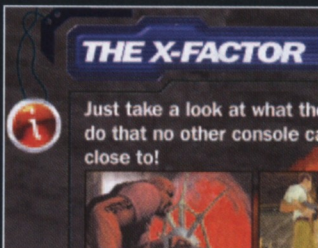
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YOU CAN TRUST US: Our reviews are written by videogame journalists with many years' experience.

THE X-FACTOR

WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES XBOX SO DIFFERENT?

We show you just what it is that makes Xbox different - cool animation sequences, amazing landscapes, unique gameplay... stuff that no other videogames console could even dream of.



SHOWING OFF: There are so many things that only Xbox can do, we like to shout about them!

review
QUAKE III

THE X-FACTOR

Just take a look at what the Xbox can do that no other console can come close to!



FROM HUMBLE PC
BEGINNINGS QUAKE HAS
COME A VERY LONG WAY...
COULD THIS BE THE ULTIMATE
INCARNATION?

QUAKE III REVOLUTION



Simpsons... meet the Simpsons, they're a modern stone-age family! Oh hang on, no... that's the Flintstones!

face it, there aren't many are gonna make that m Simpson's TV show bee

be a good format for a Simpsons game. After all, next to the satirical humor, the series is probably best known for its physical jokes. There are so many possi-

ONLINE GAMING WHERE WILL THIS GAME TAKE YOU WHEN YOU GO ONLINE?

With Xbox Internet-ready straight out of the box you need to know what kind of online activity you can get up to with your new game. Our reviews will tell you just that, plus point you in the right direction for the best Web sites!



THE WORLD WIDE WEB: Multiplayer gaming over the Net, extra cars and levels - if you can get it, we tell you!

ПОН



IN THE SHADOWS: He might have no guts to speak of, but he certainly casts a mean shadow!

Publisher	EA Sports
Developer	Fox
Genre	Sports
Code Tested	USA
Release Date	Out now
Price	£39.99
Players	1-4
Play Station	15

▲ This game has taken a lead on my console that only a few can match. It's a power struggle between 5 players, each with a different power level.

HEARTY WARNING: There's nothing quite as ripping the heart out of your foes and showing it to them before the snuff it!

There are always essential details that every review must contain. Here you'll find the publisher, developer, genre, confirmed release date (no guesses here!), price and number of players.

INFORM

Publisher EA Sports
Developer Fox
Genre Sports
Code Tested USA
Released Out now
Price £39.99
Players 1-4
Age Rating 15

IMPORTANT PRICING: No review would be complete without the price, publisher and number of players...

BAT ATTACK: If you take it to the later levels you will find you are constantly harried by bats and a right pain in the arse!

BACK ON THE QUAKE TRACK

I must admit that I really started to get into this game after a couple of hours playing. The graphics are obviously top notch, being on an Xbox and the way the game uses the hard drive means you get a truly unique gaming experience.



they've tied to many possibilities! As for wrestling... well, this isn't it. Wrestling is even the loosest American definition of the sport — generally involves locks and holds and the grapples and all sorts of other strange activities. This is just two fighters slapping each other about in a ring. The only actual to the of wrestling is the fact that the competitors have to 'pin' the opponent (read: lie on top of them) to win a round. Aside from that, it's more like two camp schoolkids having a fight in the playground.

graphic designers have attempted to recreate the look of the actual cartoon, in that rather than have 3D characters, they've tried to make the characters look like flat drawings, no matter which however. Well, let's not beat around the bush here, the Simpsons Wrestling is crap. Complete and utter crap. Not even the most optimistic will be able to find merit in this that's good to say about the game. Why you ask? Well,

ports of other strange activities. This is only actual to the of wrestling is the fact that the competitors have to 'pin' the opponent (read: lie on top of them) to win a round. Aside from that, it's more like two camp school-children having a fight in the playground.

Graphic designers have created the look of the match rather than the fighters, they've tried to make it as wrestling – even the characters define activities. The characters slapping each other inside a ring. The act of wrestling is the competitors have to 'pin' read: lie on top of them to win a round. 9

To make sure all the reviews you read in XBM are balanced, each game will get a second opinion, written by another XBM Xpert! They too will give the game a score out of ten.

2ND
OPINION

BACK ON
QUAKE T

XBOX I must admit that after playing this game after playing this game, the graphics are obviously better than those of the PS2. Xbox and the way the game uses the Xbox controller, you get a truly unique gaming experience.

TWO HEADS... are always better than one! We give two viewpoints on every game so you get an honest review.

[illegible]**ALTERNATIVELY**

Halo reviewed in Xbox 1
 7 If this isn't your sort of thing, give Halo a try – a top shooter if we ever saw one!

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top rental agencies • Great use of the main area • No living programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller use of kitchen • The main area can be too small to attract guests

Overall **8**

A brave attempt at pushing the genre that excels at every level.

- 10 Stuningly original, games don't get any better than this!
- 9 Brilliant game lacking only in ultimate ambition.
- 8 Excellent piece of work needing the odd refinement.
- 7 Good, fans of the genre should overlook the rough edges.
- 6 Above-average game but no real depth or detail.
- 5 Average at best, anything here is surely flawed.
- 4 Crap game with scrappy graphics and no originality.
- 3 Painful to play, heaped with bugs and no gameplay.
- 2 Diabolical game that only offers pleasing cover art.
- 1 It boots up. A game to avoid at absolutely all costs!

Here we mark the game on the essential elements that go together to make a good videogame. Looks, sounds, gameplay, value and long term playability are all scored out of ten. We also give you an alternative game to choose if you don't like the look of this one. The final score for each game is reached by taking an average of the two reviewer scores. We believe this will give an accurate and balanced view of the game, and be the fairest scoring system.

LOOKS
SOUNDS
GAMEPLAY

THE BOTTOM LINE: Here is where you'll find our definitive score on the game – a score you know you can trust.

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XBM VOX POP

SO, YOU'VE SEEN WHAT THE XBOX CAN DELIVER AND YOU'RE EXCITED, RIGHT? BUT WILL IT BE A SUCCESS? WILL PEOPLE BE ABLE TO SEE PAST THE MICROSOFT BRAND NAME? WE ASKED THREE GAMES PLAYING PUNTERS WHAT THEY THOUGHT AND THEN ASKED THREE VIDEOGAME INDUSTRY EXPERTS THEIR OPINIONS. HERE'S WHAT THEY ALL HAD TO SAY...

THE PUNTERS

WILL THEY BUY AN XBOX WHEN IT'S LAUNCHED?

OLIVER DEAN

16. BOURNEMOUTH

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE £299 PRICE POINT?

It's okay. I don't think it's too expensive as it's the same price that the PlayStation2 was when it came out. I will probably wait until it comes down in price to £200 though before I buy one.

ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR GAMES YOU'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO?

I think *Shenmue II* will be brilliant on Xbox. I'm a big fan of the Dreamcast so if SEGA continue to make its games for Xbox, like *Gun Valkyrie* and *Jet Set Radio Future*, I will have to buy one to play them!

DO YOU THINK THE XBOX XPERIENCE ROAD SHOW IN LONDON, BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER AND GLASGOW IS A GOOD IDEA?

I think it will help to persuade people that the Xbox is a good console, but I think they should be taking it to more cities, not everyone will want to make a special journey to those big cities to play it.



THE
PUNTERS
XBM



DAVE SMITH

29. LUDLOW

DO YOU THINK THE XBOX WILL BE A SUCCESS?

Oh yes, anything with the backing of Bill Gates has got to be good hasn't it? Simply because he can throw lots of money at it. From what I've seen from screenshots, the console looks state-of-the-art stuff!

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PRICE?

If I did have £299 available when it comes out in March I would probably buy one, but I've only just spent £199 on a PS2, so I'm quite happy with that for the moment. If everything they say is in the machine is true – like DVD and Internet access, it's not a bad price.

WHAT KIND OF GAMES WOULD YOU LOOK FOR ON A NEW CONSOLE?

Top quality reality sports and driving games are my thing, all new consoles must have a good select of these. Oh, and *Spyro the Dragon* for my sister.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE XBOX XPERIENCE ROADSHOW THAT'S GOING AROUND THE COUNTRY?

Very clever. People will be able to see how good the machine is well before it comes out next year, and that's the best way of selling it, if it looks good, compared to a PS2, then Microsoft may persuade gamers to hold on until March.

CARL BOWN

22. BOURNEMOUTH

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF XBOX SO FAR?

I'm impressed from what I've seen, it certainly seems more powerful than the PS2 and Dreamcast, which I've got at the moment. I think Microsoft's main problem will be losing their PC image. People dismiss the console just because Bill Gates is behind it.

DO YOU THINK THE ROAD SHOW AROUND THE COUNTRY WILL HELP?

It's a good idea, once people get to play the games I think they will see that there is a big jump from what is available today and Xbox. I'm a big fan of first-person shooter games and I'm really looking forward to playing *Halo* and *Unreal Championship*. I can play DVDs on it too, right?

YES, BUT YOU HAVE TO BUY THE SEPARATE DVD REMOTE CONTROL FOR £19.99.

Well, I think that's a bit of a rip-off – trust Bill Gates! Why can't they just put everything you need in the box?

IT'S SOMETHING TO DO WITH KEEPING THE COST OF THE CONSOLE DOWN.

Well, I suppose I would still buy one. £299 is okay for me, it's a new console and you expect to pay that kind of price.



DVD RIP OFF: Why can't we have the DVD remote control straight out of the box?

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GRAEME NICHOLSON
EDITOR, PLAY


WHAT DO YOU THINK OF XBOX FROM WHAT YOU'VE SEEN SO FAR?

 I'll be honest – it hasn't lit my fire. After the original android graphical demo there was a long period of silence and now we know why: it was lies. What we've ended up with is a very bland console that looks like an Eighties cable TV box and plays average games.

DO YOU THINK £299 IS A GOOD PRICE POINT?

 Well, that's fair enough innit? It's still a huge launch and I can remember when SEGA Saturns cost £399, so it doesn't seem too much to ask. The £199 PS2 could upset them though.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MICROSOFT'S IDEA TO HAVE A ROAD SHOW?


 It's a good idea if they get enough people through the door. Brave too, considering how weedy most of the software is. Of 40 confirmed games close to release, only one, *Halo*, looks like it might be remotely original, and that's been kicking around in development hell for years as it was originally headed for PS2. Xbox needed something revolutionary.

GRAEME




SIMON PHILLIPS
GROUP EDITOR, NINTENDO


WHAT DO YOU THINK OF XBOX FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN SO FAR?

 I am very impressed with the hardware, in spite of its gratuitous size and a controller that seems to have been designed with giants in mind. Though I have yet to see a 'killer app' that would make me fork out such a lot of money for it, I suspect that in time, and after Microsoft has done a little spin-doctoring, my opinion of this rank-outsider may change. However, as the Dreamcast showed, superior graphics and stellar gameplay do not a successful console make. Your average gamer wants to play *Tekken*, *Gran Turismo*, *Zelda*, *Mario*, *Metal Gear Solid* et al with his mates and this is where the Xbox is found to be lacking. Only when the Xbox is judged to be 'cool' by the gaming masses will it ever have a chance to do well.

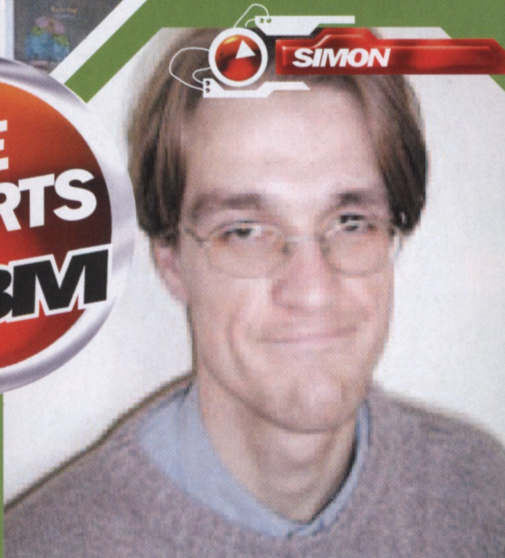
DO YOU THINK £299 IS A GOOD PRICE POINT?

 For what it is and for what it can do, I think £299 is a fair price for a stunning bit of kit. However, until the price of the Xbox is lowered it will only be the preserve of the hardcore gamer, leaving the PS2 to continue to clean up. When you are offering the complete console out of a box there's little option other than charging £299 for it. The real question is: Do people care about hard drives and broadband enough to pay a considerable amount of money for the privilege?

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MICROSOFT'S IDEA FOR THE 'XPERIENCE'?


 It's an excellent idea. It's how Nintendo discovered that *GoldenEye* was 'a bit good'. Given that SEGA failed miserably to spread the word about the Dreamcast, it's reassuring that at least Microsoft is taking the fight to the streets. It's also clear that scepticism of the Xbox needs to be quelled and, from what I understand, everyone who has seen the Xbox's games recently has been amazed. If Microsoft can create a buzz, it might dampen the enthusiasm for other consoles, but it's a long shot...

SIMON




DARREN HERRIDGE
GROUP EDITOR, PLAYSTATION

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF XBOX FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN SO FAR?

 The games I played at E3 were okay, not brilliant. As with every console, it needs a killer beat-'em-up, driving game and football simulation to get the mass market interested. Microsoft has to ensure that the games released at launch are top-notch and contain that important wow-factor. Sony's launch line-up for the PlayStation2 was utter crap, but the huge success of their original console guaranteed public interest.


Tecmo's *DOA3* is the Xbox's blockbuster beat-'em-up and unfortunately that has to be the most over-rated fighting series of all time. *Gotham*, their big driving game, looks and plays okay, but needs a lot of extra work to bring it up to the level of *GT3*. Apparently, versions of EA's *FIFA* and Konami's *ISS* will be available, but these are already big sellers on the PlayStation2. Quality software will grab the punters attention, nothing else.

DO YOU THINK £299 IS A GOOD PRICE POINT?

 No, but you'll probably find there's no way Microsoft can pump out the machine at a cheaper price. If they manage to get a good initial sell-through in the States then production of the machine's guts will become cheaper and then a price drop may occur quicker. Unfortunately, it's not exactly the best time to be releasing a console in America and Microsoft can't guarantee that the Japanese gamer is going to accept the machine.

Companies like Sony, SEGA and Nintendo have always been able to count on their home-grown gamers splashing out big bucks on new consoles, ensuring that price drops happen quicker in every territory.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MICROSOFT'S IDEA TO HAVE A ROAD SHOW?

 This is a great idea! Europe is the key to the Xbox's success. Hopefully, they've planned to carry the road shows across the whole of Europe. Big sales in Europe and the States will ensure that the console has a healthy lifespan and convince more Japanese developers to commit development time to the machine and produce games exclusively for it.

DARREN



X-RATED

1. HELENA

Each month we wine, dine and rate rendered videogame ladies – first up we've got the blonde DOA beauty Helena.

Some people play *Dead Or Alive* because it's a superb fighting game, others play it for its more bouncy qualities – and trust us when we say Helena is at the forefront of that! Just 21 years old, the French stunner is 5 foot 7 inches of purely impossible curves. Now as we all know fighting is not the most ladylike behaviour and it could be a turn off for the average male who likes to think of himself as in control. Luckily, Helena is soft-centred – in fact, the only reason she fights is to avenge her mother, a soprano singer who was shot whilst performing in an opera house.

GRAPHICS: ■■■■■■■■■■

You'd never find anything like this in real life – and we mean ever!

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: ■■■■■■■■■■

Fighting suggests stupidity but at least she has a reason to brawl.

SOUND EFFECTS: ■■■■■■■■■■

She doesn't say much but her grunts and moans are enough.

GAMEPLAY: ■■■■■■■■■■

She's able to move her body in ways you shouldn't imagine!

LASTABILITY: ■■■■■■■■■■

She's likely to break your arm before she breaks your heart.

OVERALL: ■■■■■■■■■■

**"THIS 21-YEAR-OLD
FRENCH STUNNER
HAS PURELY
IMPOSSIBLE CURVES"**
MIKE RICHARDSON, GAMES EDITOR

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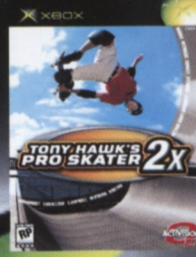
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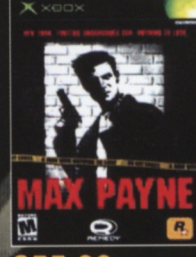
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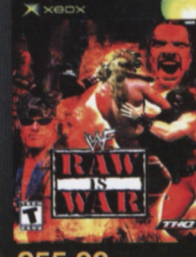
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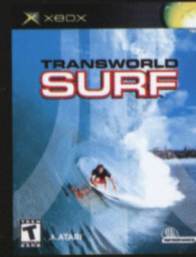
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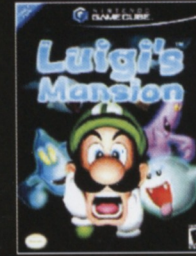


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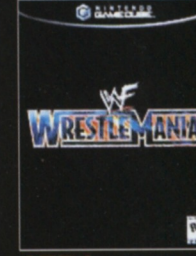
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THE **XPERIENCE**